

SEEING RED

RYAN LUCAS

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — The images showed lifeless children — wrapped in simple white cloths, their pale faces unmarked by any wound — lined up shoulder to shoulder.



A Syrian man holds up a placard during a vigil against the alleged chemical weapons attack on the suburbs of Damascus, in front the UN headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon, Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013.

(AP Photo/Hussein Malla)

der in a vivid demonstration of an attack Wednesday in which activists say the Syrian regime killed at least 130 people with toxic gas.

The Syrian government adamantly denied using chemical weapons in an artillery barrage targeting suburbs east of Damascus, calling the allegations "absolutely baseless." The U.S., Britain and France demanded that a team of U.N. experts already in the country be granted immediate access to investigate the claims.

Videos and photographs showed row upon row of bodies wrapped in white shrouds lying on a tile floor, including more than a dozen children. There was little evidence of blood or conventional injuries and most appeared to have suffocated. Survivors of the purported attack, some twitching uncontrollably, lay on gurneys with oxygen masks covering their faces.

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Manning supporter Ching Fong, front, listens as Manning defense attorney David Coombs speaks at a news conference in Hanover, Md., Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013, after Manning was sentenced to 35 years in prison for giving hundreds of thousands of classified military and diplomatic documents to the anti-secrecy group WikiLeaks.

(AP Photo/Patrick Semansky)

Manning sentenced to 35 years; pardon sought

CHARLIE SAVAGE

E. HUETTEMAN

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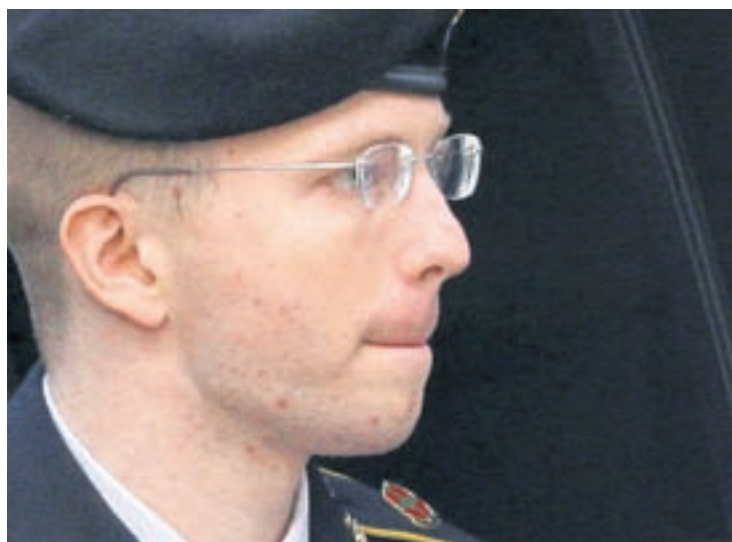
FORT MEADE, Md. — A military judge sentenced Pfc. Bradley Manning on Wednesday to 35 years in prison for providing more than 700,000 government files to WikiLeaks, a leak that lifted the veil on U.S. military and diplomatic activities around the world.

The sentence is the longest handed down in a case involving a leak of U.S. government information for the purpose of having the information reported to the public. Manning, 25, will be eligible for parole in about seven years, his lawyer said. In a two-minute hearing Wednesday morning, the judge, Army Col. Denise R. Lind, also said Manning would be dishonorably discharged and reduced in

rank from private first class to private, the lowest rank in the military. She said he would forfeit his pay but she did not impose a fine. Before the sentencing, Manning sat leaning forward with his hands folded,

whispering to his lawyer, David Coombs. His aunt and a cousin sat quietly behind him. When Lind read the sentence, Manning stood, showing no ex-

pression. He did not make a statement. The materials that Manning gave to WikiLeaks included a video taken during a U.S. helicopter attack in Baghdad in 2007 in which civilians were killed, including two journalists. He also gave WikiLeaks some 250,000 diplomatic cables, dossiers of detainees being imprisoned without trial at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and hundreds of thousands of incident reports from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Immediately after the judge left, military guards flanked Manning and hustled him out the front of the courtroom as a half-dozen supporters in the back of the courtroom shouted words of encouragement at him.



Army Pfc. Bradley Manning is escorted into a courthouse in Fort Meade, Md., Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013, before a sentencing hearing in his court martial.

(AP Photo/Patrick Semansky)

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Palestinians warn of UN move over settlements

KARIN LAUB

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — The Palestinians might turn to U.N. bodies in response to Israeli settlement building even before their negotiations with Israel have run their course, a Palestinian spokeswoman said Wednesday, reflecting growing frustration over recent Israeli plans to promote more than 3,000 new settlement homes.

If the U.S. is unable to halt Israeli construction on war-won lands, deemed illegal by most of the international community, the Palestinians may have to seek re-

dress elsewhere, said Hanan Ashrawi, a senior official in the Palestine Liberation Organization.

"We are saying very clearly that if Israel does not stop, then we have to move," Ashrawi said during a tour of Israeli settlements in east Jerusalem where hundreds of new apartments are planned.

Ashrawi said she was expressing the official Palestinian position, though it was not clear if her warning was a sign of frustration or actual intent. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas might be reluctant to disrupt recently relaunched

negotiations with such a step, for fear of incurring U.S. anger.

Last year, Abbas won broad-based U.N. General Assembly recognition of a state of Palestine in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem, lands Israel captured in 1967. Israel fears further U.N. recognition of the Palestinians will deepen its international isolation.

An official in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said the Palestinians had promised to suspend their U.N. campaign during the negotiations, which are envisioned

to last up to nine months. If they break that promise, they would violate one of the commitments that helped restart talks after a five-year freeze, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity in line with briefing regulations. Ashrawi acknowledged that U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry had asked the Palestinians not to join U.N. agencies or turn to the International Criminal Court during the negotiations. The Palestinians have threatened to pursue war crimes charges over Israeli settlement building in the court if peace efforts fail. □



Photo shows the Jewish neighborhood of Pisgat Zeev in east Jerusalem, with the Shuafat refugee camp in the background and Israel's separation barrier running between them. The Palestinians might turn to U.N. bodies in response to Israeli settlement building, a spokeswoman said Wednesday.

(AP Photo/Sebastian Scheiner)

Rights group wants answers over UK leaks reaction

JAMEY KEATEN

RAPHAEL SATTER

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — In an unusual warning, Europe's top human rights organization said Wednesday that Britain's reaction to the exposure of the United States' vast surveillance program had potentially troubling consequences for free expression.

Using language usually reserved for authoritarian holdouts in Eastern Europe or the Caucasus, the Strasbourg-based Council

of Europe asked British authorities to explain why they ordered the destruction of computer equipment held by the Guardian newspaper — the publication at the center of the revelations — and the detention of a reporter's partner at London's Heathrow Airport. "These measures, if confirmed, may have a potentially chilling effect on journalists' freedom of expression as guaranteed by ... the European Convention on Human Rights," Secretary General Thorbjørn Ja-

gland said in an open letter to British Home Secretary Theresa May.

Britain's Home Office declined to comment on the European Council's letter late Wednesday.

The Council of Europe, a separate entity from the EU, runs the European Court of Human Rights, which enforces the rights code signed by the council's 47 member states. The watchdog body regularly intervenes on human rights issues across the continent, but the language

deployed in the letter was more familiar from council communications to countries with shaky records on the rule of law.

Council spokesman Daniel Holtgen said the words "chilling effect" had previously been used in reference to situations in Turkey and Azerbaijan.

"Rarely has there been the case that we've expressed concern over a Western state," he said in a telephone interview. "The bottom line is: We have to have the same standards." □

Premier: BVI to comply with US tax evasion law

DAVID McFADDEN

Associated Press

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP)

— The British Virgin Islands' leader said this week that the Caribbean territory with a major offshore financial sector has started talks with the U.S. Treasury to comply with a law designed to crack down on offshore tax evasion.

The territory of roughly 30,000 people near Puerto Rico is one of the world's top offshore trust jurisdictions and the nominal home to more than 500,000 companies. It provides incorporation registries so global businesses can claim they are based on the islands and effectively sidestep taxes in countries where their work is performed.

Premier Orlando Smith told reporters that his administration is negotiating an "intergovernmental agreement" with Washington to comply with the U.S. Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, a sweeping anti-tax evasion law that is expected to take effect next year.

Smith said the islands' crucial financial services industry has been consulted and agrees with the move. "We are of the very considered opinion that this course is the best one to adopt for the BVI," Smith said at a press briefing on the main island of Tortola.

Last week, the Cayman Islands announced an agreement with the U.S. on providing information on accounts held by U.S. citizens and residents under the law, which targets non-tax compliance. Cayman is considered the world's sixth largest financial center and a major haven for mutual funds and private equity.

For years, international companies, hedge funds and super-rich investors have taken advantage of offshore financial centers in the Caribbean and elsewhere, drawn by regulations and legal systems that make it easy to move capital internationally. □

NSA collected thousands of U.S. communications

KIMBERLY DOZIER
AP Intelligence Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The National Security Agency declassified three secret court opinions Wednesday showing how it scooped up as many as 56,000 emails and other communications by Americans not connected to terrorism annually over three years, revealed the error to the court and then fixed the problem.

Director of National Intelligence James Clapper authorized the release.

The opinions show that when the NSA reported its inadvertent gathering of American-based Internet traffic to the court in 2011, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court ordered the agency to find ways to limit what it collects and how long it keeps it.

Three senior U.S. intelligence officials said Wednesday that national security officials realized the extent of its inadvertent collection of Americans' data from fiber optic cables in September 2011. One of the officials said the problem became apparent during internal discussions between NSA and Justice Department officials about the program's technical operation.

"They were having a discussion and a light bulb went on," the official said. The problem, according to the officials, was that the top secret Internet-sweeping operation, which was targeting metadata contained in the emails of foreign users, was also amassing thousands of emails that were bundled up with the targeted materials. Because many web mail services use such bundled transmissions, the official said, it was impossible to collect the targeted materials without also sweeping up data from innocent domestic U.S. users.

The officials did not explain, however, why they did not prepare for that possibility when the surveillance program was created and why they discovered it only

after the program was well under way.

Officials said that when they realized they had an American communication, the communication was destroyed. But it was not clear how they determined whom an email belonged to and whether any NSA analyst had actually read the content of the email. The officials said the bulk of the information was never accessed or analyzed.

As soon as the extent of the problem became clear, the officials said, the Obama administration provided classified briefings to both Senate and House intelligence committees within days. At the same time, officials also informed the secret Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, which later issued the three 2011 rulings released Wednesday — with redactions — as part of the government's latest disclosure of documents.

The officials briefed reporters on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to describe the program publicly.

The documents were



Verizon special service technician Mark Rose adjust cables attached to a framework in a Verizon network room at the Main Post Office in New York. Three senior U.S. intelligence officials said Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013, that the NSA realized that when it was gathering up bundled Internet communications from fiber optic cables, with the cooperation of telecommunications providers like AT&T, that it was often collecting thousands of emails or other Internet transactions by Americans who had no connection to the intended terror target being tracked.

(AP Photo/Gregory Bull)

declassified to help the Obama administration explain some of the most recent disclosures made by The Washington Post after it published classified documents provided by former NSA systems analyst Edward Snowden.

A senior administration official said some of the sur-

veillance documents released were made public in response to a lawsuit, filed by the privacy group Electronic Frontier Foundation. Clapper's office had no comment on the lawsuit.

One of the intelligence officials briefing reporters said the newly declassified doc-

uments should help explain "the reasons why people shouldn't go into a panic over articles they read in the press."

The documents were to be posted later in the day on a new website <http://icontherecord.tumblr.com> that went live Wednesday afternoon. □

Police:

Georgia school suspect had nearly 500 rounds

KATE BRUMBACK
Associated Press
LITHONIA, Georgia (AP)

— A suspect in an Atlanta-area school shooting took a photo of himself with an AK 47-rifle and packed up nearly 500 rounds of ammunition before the attack — enough to shoot more than half the school's students, police said Wednesday.

No one was injured in shooting Tuesday, but the suspect exchanged gunfire with police who surrounded the elementary school in Decatur, Georgia.

The school's 870 students were evacuated and terrified parents rushed to pick up their children. Some said they instantly thought of the massacre of 20 chil-

dren and six educators at a Connecticut elementary school in December. That



In this photo released by the DeKalb County Sheriff's Department, Michael Brandon Hill, 20, is shown.

(AP Photo/Dekalb CSD)

attack has dominated arguments over gun control in the U.S.

A woman whose family once took in the suspect in Tuesday's shooting, Michael Brandon Hill, said he

was mentally ill but never violent in the past. Natasha Knotts told The Associated Press that Hill lived with her and her husband for a time when he was in his late teens. She says she served as a mother figure for Hill in after he started coming to the small church where she and her husband are pastors.

Police said Hill got the AK-47-rifle from an acquaintance, but it's not clear if he stole it or had permission to take it.

Knotts said Hill called her sister Tuesday afternoon before the shooting and said he had a rifle but didn't say what he was planning to do. She said she believes that Hill acted out as a plea for help.

"This is something that's to-

tally out of his character. This is not him. This is not the Mike that I know," she said in an interview at her home.

Knotts said she thinks of herself as the 20-year-old Hill's adoptive mother. Hill told her that his birth mother was dead and that he didn't know his father. He also has a brother.

Hill held one or two staff members in the front office captive for a time, the police chief said, making one of them call a local TV station. At some point, he fired into the floor of the school office. As officers swarmed the campus outside, he shot at them at least a half a dozen times with an assault rifle from inside the school and they returned fire, police said. □

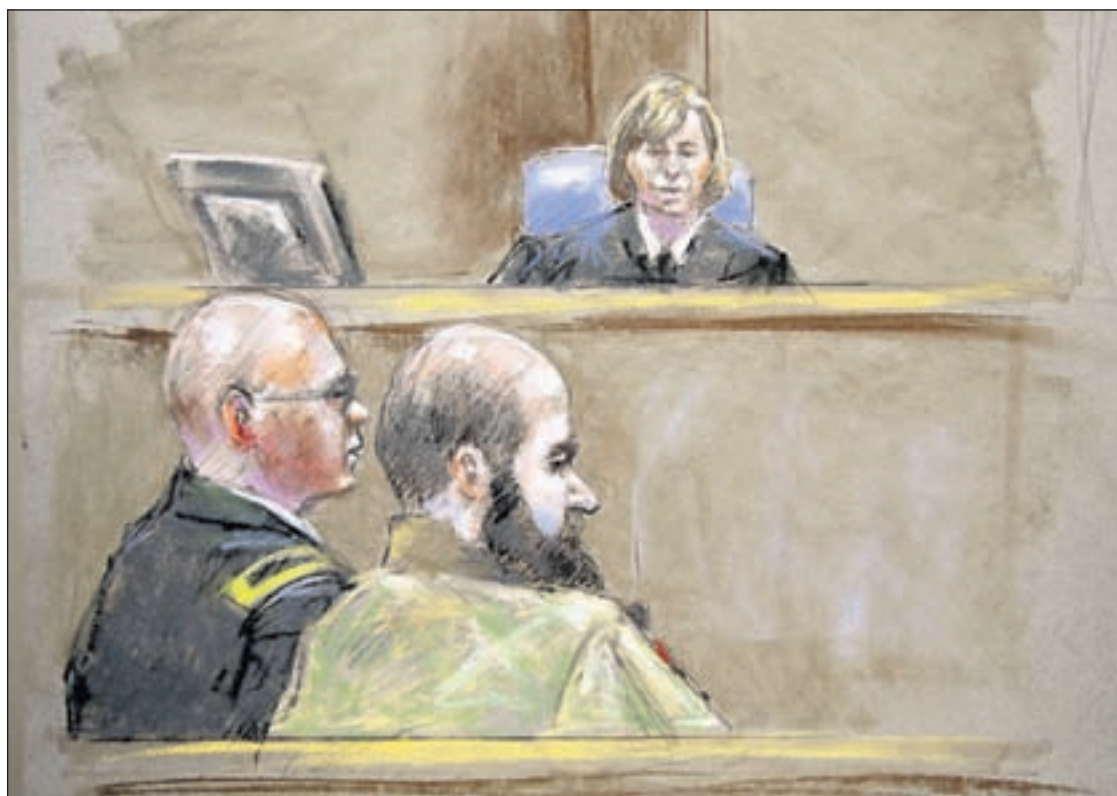
Hasan: 'Illegal war' provoked Fort Hood rampage

**MICHAEL GRACZYK
PAUL J. WEBER
Associated Press**

FORT HOOD, Texas (AP) — The U.S. soldier on trial for the deadly 2009 shooting rampage at Fort Hood rested his case Wednesday without calling a single witness or testifying in his

the option of convicting him on the lesser charge of voluntary manslaughter. "I would like to agree with the prosecution that it wasn't done under the heat of sudden passion," Hasan said. "There was adequate provocation — that these were deploying

only piece of evidence he submitted was a favorable evaluation he received from a former supervisor a few days before the attack. Before the trial began, the judge had barred Hasan from arguing that the killings were in defense of Tal-



In this court room sketch, Judge Col. Tara Osborn, top, Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, right, and defense attorney, Lt. Col. Kris Poppe, left, are shown, Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013, in Fort Hood, Texas. Hasan rested his case Wednesday without calling any witnesses or testifying in his own defense. Hasan is accused of killing 13 people and wounding more than 30 others at the Texas military base in November 2009.

(AP Photo/Brigitte Woosley)

defense, but he later told the judge that the attack was motivated by American soldiers deploying to "engage in an illegal war." Maj. Nidal Hasan could face the death penalty if convicted for the attack that killed 13 people and wounded more than 30 others at the Texas military base. But when given the chance to rebut prosecutors' lengthy case — which included nearly 90 witnesses and hundreds of pieces of evidence — the Army psychiatrist declined. Prosecutors rested their case Tuesday. About five minutes after court began Wednesday, the judge asked Hasan how he wanted to proceed. He answered: "The defense rests." But after jurors were dismissed, Hasan told the judge, Col. Tara Osborn, that the jury shouldn't have

soldiers that were going to engage in an illegal war." Prosecutors had no objection. "There's not a shred of evidence to suggest the accused was acting under a heat of passion as he was committing the single largest mass murder on a U.S. military installation ever," Col. Steve Henricks, one of the prosecutors, told the judge. The exchange came during a late-afternoon hearing, hours after Osborn adjourned jurors for the day. Closing arguments are scheduled to begin Thursday in the court-martial, the military's equivalent of a trial, though it's unclear whether Hasan plans to say anything. So far, Hasan has made no attempt to prove his innocence. He has questioned just three witnesses and made few objections. The

iban fighters in Afghanistan. Since then, the military defense attorneys ordered to help Hasan during the trial have accused him of trying to secure himself a death sentence, though Hasan denies those claims. Hasan, an American-born Muslim, began the trial with a brief opening statement acknowledging that evidence would "clearly show" he was the man who opened fire inside a medial building at Fort Hood on Nov. 5, 2009. He also described himself as a soldier who had "switched sides." Since then, he has mostly sat in silence. He didn't question any of the witnesses who identified him as the gunman who, dressed in Army clothing and armed with a semi-automatic pistol, shouted "Allahu Akbar!" — Arabic for "God is great!" — before firing hundreds of rounds. □

Q&A ON THE NEWS

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Q: When terrorist threats force the closure of embassies in countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, only essential personnel are left behind. Who provides security for these workers?

-- **William McKee Jr., Flowery Branch, Ga.**

A: The U.S. Department of Defense continued to have "personnel on the ground in Yemen to support the U.S. State Department and monitor the security situation," a Pentagon spokesman said when al-Qaida threats recently forced temporary closures of 19 diplomatic posts in the Middle East and Africa. Last September, the U.S. sent squads of Marines from the Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team (FAST) to protect threatened embassies in Sanaa, Yemen, and Tripoli, Libya. The FAST teams are trained specifically to make "short-notice deployments in response to terrorist threats and to reinforce security at U.S. embassies," The Associated Press reported.

Q: I was impressed with the way Judge Gregory A. Adams handled Andrea Sneiderman's trial. He was respectful of the jurors' time, kept the trial moving and the courtroom under control. This brings to mind Judge Lance Ito in the O.J. Simpson trial. What happened to Ito? I don't think I've heard about him since that trial.

-- **Kathy McDonough, Peachtree Corners, Ga.**

A: Ito, who was the judge in Simpson's murder trial in 1995, was a Superior Court judge in Los Angeles until April 2012, when budget cuts closed 55 courtrooms throughout Los Angeles County. Ito now goes where he's needed, filling in for sick judges or "reviewing petitions from life-term prisoners in a courtroom stripped of chairs in the jury box and witness stand," the Orange County (Calif.) Register reported in January. In February 2012, Ito told FoxNews.com: "I'm married to the same woman, live in the same neighborhood, drive the same car, but looking forward to retirement in the not too distant future."

Q: Aren't the hooks in David Bowie's "Under Pressure" and Vanilla Ice's "Ice Ice Baby" almost identical? It sounds like Vanilla Ice adds one beat after the second series of seven beats. It seems awfully close to plagiarism to me.

-- **Donald Varn, Conyers, Ga.**

A: Robert Van Winkle, known as Vanilla Ice, paid \$4 million to Bowie and Queen, who collaborated on the 1981 song called "Under Pressure," in an out-of-court settlement, he said in a 2006 interview. Van Winkle admitted he "sampled" the bass line from "Under Pressure" on his 1990 hit, "Ice Ice Baby." "Yeah, I paid them," he told the Iowa State Daily. "... That's why when you read the credits on 'Ice Ice Baby' now, it says Freddie Mercury and David Bowie, because they're on there." Mercury was the lead singer for Queen.

Q: Why don't the Atlanta Falcons just implode the Georgia Dome and build the new stadium on the same site? It would probably cost less, and the Falcons could play at Georgia Tech or the University of Georgia while the new stadium is being built.

-- **Jim Rakowitz, Powder Springs, Ga.**

A: The idea of imploding the Georgia Dome and transplanting the Falcons for two or three years during construction of a new stadium was discussed in early negotiations but dismissed for various reasons. The GWCCA and the city of Atlanta would prefer to build the new stadium on a site south of the Georgia Dome because of its proximity to two MARTA stations. The Falcons have said the south site isn't feasible because property belonging to Mount Vernon Baptist Church, which would have to relocate, hasn't been acquired. Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed is in negotiations with the church. The Falcons have begun a study of a site north of the Georgia Dome. □

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Manning sentenced to 35 years; pardon sought

Continued from front

"We'll keep fighting for you, Bradley," one shouted. Another said, "You are a hero." After Manning left the room, another supporter yelled, "We love you." Several hours after the sentencing, Coombs told reporters that he would apply for a presidential pardon for Manning next week. At the White House, Josh Earnest, a spokesman, responded that Manning's application would be considered "like any other application." Coombs said that he wept after hearing Manning's sentence and recounted how Manning comforted him as they left the courtroom. "He looks at me and he says, 'It's OK,?' " Coombs said. "He is a resilient young man. If nothing else, he is resilient." Manning downloaded the materials from a classified computer network to which he had access as a low-level Army intelligence analyst while deployed in Iraq in 2010. The documents he gave to WikiLeaks set off a scramble inside the government as officials sought to minimize any harm, including protecting foreign nationals identified in some documents as having helped U.S. diplomats or the military. No evidence emerged that anyone was killed because of the leaks. Among other things, the

files also exposed the abuse of detainees by Iraqi officers under the watch of U.S. forces and showed that civilian deaths during the Iraq War were most likely significantly higher than official estimates. "It's outrageous," one supporter who had been in the courtroom, Laura Watkins, 63, of Alexandria, Va., said of the sentence. "What I've seen is a travesty of justice." The judge's decision to impose a 35-year sentence roughly split the difference between what the prosecution had requested - 60 years - and the 20 years that Manning had exposed himself to before the trial began, when he pleaded guilty to a lesser version of the charges he was facing. Under the military system, convicts are eligible for parole after serving a third of their sentences, and Manning is receiving 1,294 days credit - a little more than three years - for time already in custody and for a 112-day period in which the judge ruled he was mistreated during pretrial confinement. He is expected to serve his time at the army prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. Steven Aftergood, a government secrecy specialist with the Federation of American Scientists, said Manning's 35-year sentence reflected how much his case - involving leaks of entire archives. □



Supporters of Army Pfc. Bradley Manning hold up banners as they protest outside of the gates at Fort Meade, Md., Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013, during the sentencing hearing in Manning's court martial.

(AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

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US health care costs climb moderately, survey says

ANDREW POLLACK

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Premiums for employer-provided health insurance have increased by relatively modest amounts this year, according to a new survey, a further sign that once-torrid health care inflation has abated for now. The average annual premium for a family rose 4 percent in 2013, to \$16,351, according to the survey results released Tuesday by the Kaiser Family Foundation. Annual premiums for individual policies purchased through an employer rose 5 percent, to \$5,884.

The 4 percent increase for a family is relatively tame, at least compared with the roughly 10 percent annual increases experienced a decade ago. But it is still a far bigger rise than 1.8 percent increase in wages and the 1.1 percent rate of inflation in the last year, the foundation said.

"If you are comparing it to 10 years ago in health care, it seems modest," said Helen B. Darling, chief executive of the National Business Group on Health, which represents large employers. "If you compare it to the economy and what inflation is doing, I don't think it's modest at all."

The data also suggest that the new health care law is not leading, at least so far, to a rapid escalation of insurance costs.

"The critics will have a much harder time blaming big premium increases in employer insurance on Obamacare this year, because there aren't any big premium increases," Drew Altman, chief executive of the Kaiser foundation, said in a telephone news conference Tuesday.

Conversely, however, it is not clear whether the Affordable Care Act, as the

law is formally known, has contributed to the moderating of premium increases, Kaiser researchers said. Premiums have been held in check partly by increasing out-of-pocket costs that workers pay through co-payments and deductibles.

The survey found that 78 percent of covered workers have a general deduct-

ible, up from 72 percent in 2012. About 38 percent of covered workers now face a deductible of at least \$1,000. At companies with fewer than 200 employees, 58 percent of covered workers have a deductible that large, with 31 percent having a deductible of at least \$2,000, up from 12 percent in 2008.

"It's part of what I see as a quiet revolution in health insurance, from more comprehensive to less comprehensive, with higher deductibles," said Dr. Altman, who added that that

should appeal to conservatives. "The vision of insurance that they've always favored, with more skin in the game, is the one that's coming to dominate in the marketplace." While out-of-pocket costs are going up, the proportion of total premiums paid by workers out of their paychecks did not change in

last year, a difference that was not statistically significant. Among companies with three to nine workers, 45 percent offered some benefits compared with 50 percent in 2012, a decline that also was not statistically significant.

The 4 percent increase in family premiums in 2013 was similar to the increase in 2012 and in most of the



Drew Altman, chief executive and president of the Kaiser Family Foundation, at his office in Menlo Park, Calif. Premiums for employer-provided health insurance have increased by relatively modest amounts this year, according to a survey released by the Kaiser Family Foundation, a further sign that once torrid health care inflation has abated for now.

(Jim Wilson/The New York Times)

the last year, Kaiser said. On average workers paid \$4,565, or about 28 percent, of the average family premium and \$999, or 17 percent, of the average individual premium. The survey results showed that employers are not dropping health benefits and forcing their employees to seek coverage on the new exchanges being set up under the Affordable Care Act.

About 57 percent of all companies are offering health benefits this year compared with 61 percent

last several years. Since 1999, however, premiums have nearly tripled while wages have gone up only 50 percent and consumer prices only 40 percent.

The slower increase in premiums appears to reflect slower growth of health care spending in general that is partly explained by people forgoing visits to doctors and medical procedures because of the bad economy.

There is a debate about whether the Affordable Care Act is contributing to the moderation. □

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Ex-United Air employee made bomb threats

DAVID KOENIG
AP Airlines Writer

DALLAS (AP) — A former United Airlines flight attendant from Germany has agreed to plead guilty to making a bomb threat against a United jet flying between London and Los Angeles.

The man's attorney said that United had declined to investigate the man's claims that a male supervisor sexually harassed him.

A United spokeswoman confirmed that the man had worked for the airline but declined to comment further. The man had been hired by American Airlines to become a flight attendant shortly before he was arrested.

According to court documents, Patrick Cau used pay phones near his Los Angeles home and around America to make threats against six United flights between last October and January.

Under an agreement filed last week in federal district court in Los Angeles, Cau will plead guilty to one count of making a bomb threat against a plane. Cau, who also goes by the name Patrick Kaiser, is expected to enter a plea Monday and be sentenced this fall.

The felony charge carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison and a fine of \$250,000, although federal prosecutors agreed to recommend a lesser sentence.

Cau agreed to pay restitution — United said it lost \$267,912 because the flights were delayed or canceled after the threats — and, as a German citizen, he also faces possible deportation. □

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ROBERT PEAR

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Median household income has begun to recover over the last two years, but households still have not come close to regaining the purchasing power they had before the financial crisis began, a new study says. The study, issued Wednesday by two former Census Bureau officials, suggests why many people remain glum even though the economy is growing and unemployment has declined. Although inflation-adjusted median annual household income rose to \$52,100 in June, from its recent trough of \$50,700 in August 2011, it remained \$2,400 lower - a 4.4 percent decline - than

in June 2009, when the recession ended. This drop, combined with the 1.8 percent decline that occurred during the recession, leaves median household income 6.1 percent - or \$3,400 - below its level in December 2007, when the economic slump began. Since the end of the recession, the study said, household income has declined for all but a few population groups. Some of the largest percentage declines occurred for groups whose income was already well below the median, like African-Americans, Southerners, people who did not attend college, and households headed by people under age 25. "Groups with low incomes tended

to have steeper declines in income," said Gordon W. Green Jr., who wrote the report with John F. Coder, a colleague at Sentier Research, which specializes in analyzing household economic data. Households headed by people ages 65 to 74 were the only group in the study that experienced a statistically significant increase in post-recession income, helped both by the continued increase in Social Security benefits and by the decision of some older workers to remain in the workforce or re-enter it. The figures, adjusted for changes in the cost of living over time, include income before taxes and exclude capital gains. The number of households with

income above the median is the same as the number below it. The data offers a potential preview of the official Census Bureau statistics on income and poverty for 2012, scheduled to be released next month. The Sentier data is based on the Current Population Survey, a monthly government survey of about 50,000 households. The researchers used the same definition of income as the Census Bureau uses in its annual report on income and poverty. The two sets of estimates have shown broadly similar trends in recent years. Because recessions rarely match up perfectly with calendar years, the annual census data often does not allow

for precise comparisons with the start and end of downturns. The most recent downturn ended in June 2009, according to a committee of academic economists widely considered to the arbiter of the business cycle. The economy has been growing since 2009, but more slowly and inconsistently than many Americans would like and many economists and policy makers had predicted. President Barack Obama has made the economy's condition his main focus this summer, promising new efforts to encourage economic growth, including a series of proposals on higher education that he is expected to announce Thursday. □

US home sales hit 5.4M in July, highest since '09

C. S. RUGABER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — For the first time since 2009, previously occupied U.S. homes are selling at a pace associated with a healthy market. Sales jumped 6.5 percent in July to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.4 million, the National Association of Realtors said Wednesday. Over the past 12 months, sales have surged 17.2 percent. The trend shows that housing remains a driving force for the economy even as mortgage rates have risen from record lows. Buyers have been purchasing previously occupied homes at an annual pace above 5 million for three straight months. The last

time that happened was in 2007. Sales are far above the 3.45 million pace of July 2010, the low point after the housing bubble burst. Analysts generally think a healthy sales pace is roughly between 5 and 5.5 million. Buyers last month weren't dissuaded by higher long-term mortgage rates, which have jumped, on average, a full percentage point since early May. The higher rates might have led some potential buyers to buy in July out of fear that rates will rise further. July's report captures completed sales, which typically reflect mortgage rates that were locked in a month or two earlier. A fuller effect of higher mortgage rates might not be

clear until August home sales are reported next month.

bond purchases. The Fed's bond purchases have kept long-term interest rates, in-

on the 30-year fixed mortgage remains low by historical standards. It was 4.4 percent last week.

"The one-percentage-point jump in mortgage rates in the past year doesn't seem to have slowed home sales," said Sal Guatieri, senior economist at BMO Capital Markets. "The jump in rates might have pulled forward some purchases, so a few more months of data are likely needed to wave the all-clear flag."

Steady hiring and low mortgage rates have helped the housing market recover over the last year. Banks have also begun easing tight credit standards, which have made it hard for many people to get mortgages. □



A home for sale sits behind a sign that reads, "sale pending," in San Diego. The National Association of Realtors said Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013, that existing home sales jumped 6.5 percent last month from a 5.06 million pace in June. They have risen 17.2 percent over the past 12 months.

(AP Photo/Gregory Bull)

Sales could slow later this year, especially if the Federal Reserve scales back its

cluding mortgage rates, historically low. For now, the average rate

Syria attack renews chemical arms claim

Continued from front

Activists and the opposition leadership gave widely varying death tolls, ranging from as low as 136 to as high as 1,300. But even the most conservative tally would make it the deadliest alleged chemical attack in Syria's civil war.

For months now, the rebels, along with the United States, Britain and France, have accused the Syrian government of using chemical weapons in its campaign to try to snuff out the rebellion against President Bashar Assad that began in March 2011. The regime and its ally, Russia, have denied the allegations, pinning the blame on the rebels.

The murky nature of the purported attacks, and the difficulty of gaining access to the sites amid the carnage of Syria's war, has made it impossible to verify the claims. After months of negotiations, a U.N. team finally arrived in Damascus on Sunday to begin its investigation into the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria. But the probe is limited to three sites and only seeks to determine whether chemical agents were used, not who unleashed them.

The timing of Wednesday's attack — four days after the U.N. team's arrival — raised questions about why the regime would use chemical agents now. The White House said the U.S. was "deeply concerned" by the reports, and spokesman Josh Earnest said the Obama administration had requested that the U.N. "urgently investigate this new allegation."

"If the Syrian government



Syrian military soldiers check identifications at a check point on Baghdad street, in Damascus, Syria, Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013. Syrian opposition groups claimed scores have died on Wednesday in a government offensive near Damascus, attacks in which some activists say regime troops used "poisonous gas." The government denied the reports.

has nothing to hide and is truly committed to an impartial and credible investigation of chemical weapons use in Syria, it will facilitate the U.N. team's immediate and unfettered access to this site," Earnest said.

Almost exactly one year ago, President Barack Obama called chemical weapons a "red line" for potential military action, and in June, the U.S. said it had conclusive evidence that Assad's regime had used chemical weapons against opposition forces. But the possibility of intervention seemed ever

smaller after Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in a letter this week that the administration is opposed to even limited action because it believes rebels fighting the Assad government wouldn't support American interests. Russia decried Wednesday's reports as "alarmist." Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich denounced an "aggressive information campaign" laying full blame on the Syrian government as a provocation aimed at undermining efforts to convene peace talks between the

two sides.

The regime began shelling the capital's eastern suburbs of Zamalka, Arbeen and Ein Tarma around 3 a.m. as part of a fierce government offensive in the area, which has a strong rebel presence, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group. The heavy thud of artillery and rockets, as well as the grinding roar of fighter jets, could be heard by Damascus residents throughout the night and early Wednesday, and a pall of gray smoke hung over the towns. □

(AP Photo/Hassan Ammar)

Severe Tropical Storm Trami hits Taiwan in north

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Severe Tropical Storm Trami struck Wednesday in heavily populated northern Taiwan, prompting schools and offices to close down as heavy rains triggered landslides and other disruptions throughout the island.

At 5:30 p.m. (0330 GMT), the Central Weather Bureau said the center of the storm was located offshore, 100 kilometers (63 miles) northeast of the capital of Taipei, packing sustained winds of 108 kmh (68 mph) with gusts of up to 137 kmh. It was expected to complete its passage of the island's northern coast by midnight, heading westward on a direct course toward the Chinese province of Fujian.

An increase of 10 kph in sustained wind speed would cause the storm to be upgraded to typhoon status, though forecasters were unsure if that would happen. Earlier this week, Trami wreaked havoc in the Philippine capital of Manila and in outlying regions, leaving 15 dead, 41 injured and affecting more than 1 million people as floodwaters swamped wide swathes of the densely-populated region. President Benigno Aquino III visited emergency shelters to distribute food packs and cheer up thousands of displaced villagers.

In Taiwan, the storm had dumped 300 mm (12 inches) of rain on Taipei by nightfall Wednesday, and close to 500 mm in mountainous areas of northwestern Taiwan. With heavy rains expected to continue through most of Thursday, those totals could easily double. Amid the downpour, a landslide closed the only road to a remote mountain community in Hsinchu county, trapping 70 residents, though authorities said no one was in danger and crews were working to redress the situation. Other landslides were reported north of Taipei and in the central part of the island. □

Rare polio virus spreads to north of Israel

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's president is urging the country's children to get polio boosters after a rare appearance of the virus spread to the north of the country.

President Shimon Peres met

with children getting vaccinations at a Jerusalem clinic on Wednesday together with the Health Minister, Yael German.

German said new lab results show the "virus is migrating north and spread-

ing." Peres detailed the suffering his family endured when one of his children was stricken by polio as an infant. Israel this week began a nationwide campaign to inoculate children with booster drops after a

rare discovery of the virus in the south of the country. Israel already immunizes its children against the disease. The campaign gives a second boost of protection. There have been no clinical cases of the virus. □



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Egypt to put Mubarak under house arrest

SARAH EL DEEB
Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's prime minister ordered Wednesday that deposed autocrat Hosni Mubarak be placed under house arrest after he's released from prison following more than two years in detention. The announcement came hours after a court ordered Mubarak be released for the first time since he was first detained in April 2011, a move threatening to further stoke tension in a deeply divided Egypt. Many feared Mubarak's release would amplify Islamist allegations that last month's military coup was a step toward restoring the old regime. Prime Minister Hazem el-Beblawi said in a statement that he ordered Mubarak be put under house arrest as part of the emergency measures put in place this month. The decision ap-

peared designed to ease some of the criticism over Mubarak being freed from prison and ensure he appears in court next week for a separate trial. Prison officials said Mubarak may be released as early as Thursday. It is not clear where Mubarak will be held under house arrest, whether in one of his residences or in a hospital considering his frail health. Since his ouster, Mubarak's supporters have released conflicting details about his health, including that the 85 year old suffered a stroke, a heart attack and at times went into a coma. His critics called these an attempt to gain public sympathy and court leniency. His wife, Suzanne, has been living in Cairo and keeping a low-profile, occasionally visiting Mubarak and their two sons in prison. But security officials said

Mubarak was more likely to be moved to a military hospital because of his ailing health. The order for Mubarak's release followed an appeal by his lawyers in one of his corruption cases. He is also on trial on charges of complicity in the killing of protesters in the 2011 uprising against him that could put him back behind bars. He faces investigation into at least two other corruption cases as well. The prospect of Mubarak being freed, even if only temporarily, would feed into the larger crisis bedeviling Egypt: the violent fallout from the July 3 coup that unseated President Mohammed Morsi, an Islamist who became Egypt's



Former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak addresses the media in this 2010 file photo. Egypt's prime minister ordered Wednesday Mubarak be placed under house arrest after he's released from prison.

(AP Photo/Markus Schreiber)

first freely elected president following Mubarak's ouster. Mubarak's release "will cause chaos," said human rights lawyer Nasser Amin. □

EU halts some arms exports to Egypt, yet aid untouched

RAF CASERT
Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union on Wednesday decided to suspend exports of weapons and goods that could be used for internal repression but did not halt aid programs for fear of hurting ordinary Egyptians already hit hard. Instead, the 28 EU foreign ministers called on the military authorities and the supporters of deposed President Mohammed Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood movement to resume negotiations to avoid further bloodshed. "It was decided ... to suspend all arms deliveries that can be used inter-

nally," said French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius following the emergency meeting in Brussels. "We have decided to maintain our aid for the Egyptian population because it already suffers enormously," he added. Clashes between Egyptian security forces and Morsi's supporters have killed hundreds of people since last week. "We do believe that the recent operations of the security forces have been disproportionate and we're worried about the resulting alarming number of people that have been killed," said the EU's foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton. □

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ECB official deflects talk of more aid for Greece

**ELENA BECATOROS
NICHOLAS PAPHITIS
Associated Press**

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — A top European Central Bank official on Wednesday deflected the growing speculation that Greece will require a new financial aid deal, saying it won't be clear for months whether Athens would even qualify for more assistance.

Joerg Asmussen, one of the ECB's six executive board members, said the easing of Greece's recession in the April-June quarter provided "the first signs of stabilization" and that there had been progress in public finances.

"I have huge respect for what has happened and I would suggest (Greece continues) with the reforms that have started ... (and shows) perseverance, even if it is difficult to do so," he said after a meeting in Athens with Greek Finance Minister Yannis Stournaras.

But he said his talks had not touched on potential future financial aid or debt relief. A day earlier,

Germany finance minister Wolfgang Schaeuble had roused talk of another rescue program for Greece, saying the country will need one — his clearest statement yet on the issue. The International Mon-

etary Fund, a key rescue loan provider, predicted last month that the bailout program would fall short of Greece's needs by 4.4 billion euros (\$5.84 billion) next year and by 6.5 billion euros (\$8.63 billion) in 2015.

Describing the expected shortfall as a "test of European support," the IMF said that finance ministers from the 17 euro countries have already begun discussions on plugging financing gaps.

Schaeuble did not specify what form the new aid should take, but ruled out a write-down on Greece's public debt, which is now mainly bailout loans owed to other European governments.

Asmussen said Greece would have to first achieve a primary surplus — budget income, excluding interest payments on debt — and fully comply with its austerity commitments.

"We will not know before Spring next year if the country has reached a primary surplus" on an annual basis, he said.

"I've seen the data for the first seven months that were encouraging, but one has to continue on this route."

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said it would only be clear "in the middle of next year" what sums might be necessary for a new rescue package.

In a preview of an interview being screened late Wednesday, Germany's SAT.1 television said Merkel still expects no debt write-down for Greece.

Opinions in the rest of Europe are divided on the matter. France's finance minister, Pierre Moscovici, said he saw no need for a new aid deal.

"It seems to me that this program is on track, that Greece is making enormous efforts to right itself ... I myself don't see the urgent need for a new program for Greece," Moscovici told France Inter radio on Tuesday.

International debt inspectors from the ECB, IMF and European Commission, collectively known as the troika, are returning to Athens in September to review progress on reforms. Their findings will help clarify whether Greece will be able to support itself once the bailout program ends.

"In that context we shall also assess a possible extension of the Greek program and its funding," Olli Rehn, the top monetary official at the European Commission, was quoted as saying by the Finnish daily Helsingin Sanomat. □



Joerg Asmussen, one of the ECB's six executive board members, left, speaks during a news conference after his meeting with Greek Finance Minister Yannis Stournaras in Athens, Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013. Asmussen is on a two days visit to Athens to discuss progress on Greece's fiscal reforms, amid increasing talk the country will need yet more assistance once its bailout program ends next year.

(AP Photo/Petros Giannakouris)

Japan nuclear watchdog may raise leak to 'serious'

**MARI YAMAGUCHI
Associated Press**

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's nuclear watchdog on Wednesday said a leakage of highly radioactive water at the crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant could be the beginning of a new disaster — a series of leaks of contaminated water from storage tanks.

The operator of the plant has built hundreds of steel tanks to store massive amounts of radioactive water coming from three melted reactors, as well as underground water running into reactor and turbine basements.

Tokyo Electric Power Co. said on Tuesday that about 300 tons (300,000 liters, 80,000 gallons) of contaminated water leaked from one of the tanks. It said it hasn't figured out how or where the water leaked, but suspects it did so through a seam.

The leak is the fifth, and the worst, since last year involving tanks of the same design at the wrecked Fukushima Dai-ichi plant, raising concerns that contaminated water could begin leaking from storage tanks one after another.

"That's what we fear the most. We must remain alert.

We should assume that what has happened once could happen again, and prepare for more," Nuclear Regulation Authority Chairman Shunichi Tanaka told a news conference. "We are in a situation where there is no time to waste."

The watchdog also proposed at a weekly meet-

ing Wednesday to raise the rating of the seriousness of the leak to level 3, a "serious incident," from level 1, "an anomaly," on an International Nuclear and Radiological event scale of eight.

The watchdog urged TEPCO to step up monitoring for leaks and take precautionary measures.

During the meeting, officials also revealed that plant workers apparently have overlooked several signs of leaks, suggesting that their twice-daily patrols were largely just a walk. They have not monitored water levels inside tanks, obviously missed a puddle forming at the bottom of the tank earlier, and kept open a valve on an anti-leakage barrier around the tanks.

TEPCO said the leaked water is believed to have mostly seeped into the ground after escaping from the barrier around the



Workers stand on storage tanks at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant at Okuma in Fukushima prefecture, northern Japan. The Japanese nuclear watchdog proposed Wednesday to define a fresh leakage of highly radioactive leak from one of the hundreds of storage tanks at Japan's crippled atomic power plant this week, its worst leak yet from such a vessel.

(AP Photo/Kyodo News)

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Protesting farmers and truckers roil Colombia

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Protesting coffee growers, farmers and truckers are blockading Colombian highways for a third day in various regions, with some protesters pelting riot police with rocks and homemade explosives. Police director Gen. Rodolfo Palomino reports at least 61 arrests in the disturbances that began Monday. The more than 30,000 protesters have an assortment of demands: Truckers want

cheaper gasoline. Potato and onion growers are demanding lower prices for fertilizer. Coffee farmers want a government subsidy extended. Many of the farmers object to free trade agreements signed with the United States and European Union that they say threaten their livelihoods. The protests do not affect vital industries. But they are a major challenge for President Juan Manuel Santos. He says he won't negotiate until blockades are lifted. □



Farmers throw coffee beans in front of the Coffee Growers Federation office during protests in Medellin, Colombia, Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2013. Farmers, truckers, and health workers have joined miners and some labor unions in protests for an array of demands that include reduced gasoline prices, increased subsidies, the cancellation of free trade agreements and the end of a crackdown on illegal mining operations.

(AP Photo/Luis Benavides)

Strong quake shakes Mexico

JOSE RIVERA
Associated Press

ACAPULCO, Mexico (AP) — A moderately strong earthquake struck near Mexico's Pacific coast resort of Acapulco on Wednesday, causing cracks in some buildings and knocking bricks and plaster off other structures. The U.S. Geological Survey said the quake at 7:38 a.m. (8:38 a.m.; 1238 GMT) had a magnitude of 6.2. It was centered near the Pacific coast and about 60 miles (100 kilometers) east of Acapulco. No significant injuries were reported, but a chunk of ornamental plaster work fell off the facade of one hotel on Acapulco's once-glamorous main boulevard. Cracks were found in the walls of a university in Acapulco and a concrete entrance gate at a local military base collapsed, said Victor Torres Ruiz, the spokesman for the state government of Guerrero,

where Acapulco is located. An apartment block also suffered structural damage, according to Constantino Gonzalez Vargas, head of the state civil defense office. Ezequiel Baltazar was driving his daughter to school in Acapulco along with his wife when the quake struck and a large chunk of rock fell from the hillside onto the trunk of his car. "Fortunately, my wife and my daughter are OK. They just were panicked," Baltazar said. Ruben Lopez, who was visiting Acapulco from Mexico City, said he was doing early morning exercises on the beach when the quake hit. "It felt like I was sinking into the sand," Lopez said. A second, smaller quake followed 24 minutes later. The USGS calculated the magnitude of the aftershock at 5.3. Traffic lights went out in the city, causing traffic jams,



A patient is evacuated from a hospital after an earthquake in Acapulco, Mexico, Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013. The U.S. Geological Survey said the quake had a magnitude of 6.2 and was centered on the Pacific coast.

(AP Photo/Bernardino Hernandez)

and fears of more possible aftershocks prompted some schools in Acapulco to send children home for the day. Buildings swayed in Mexico City, 170 miles (280 kilometers) to the north, and some people evacuated office buildings as an earthquake alarm sounded. On the city's

main boulevard, one man injured his leg as he rushed out of an office building. Mexico City Mayor Miguel Angel Mancera said there were no reports of damage or serious injuries. Mexico City is vulnerable even to distant earthquakes because much of it sits atop the muddy sedi-

ments of drained lake beds that quiver as quake waves hit. The magnitude-8.1 quake in 1985 that killed at least 6,000 people and destroyed many buildings in Mexico City was centered 250 miles (400 kilometers) away on the Pacific coast. □

Greenpeace denied entry to Russian Arctic

KARL RITTER

Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Russia has blocked a Greenpeace ship from entering Arctic waters where the environmentalist group was planning to protest against oil exploration activities by Russian oil company Rosneft and ExxonMobil, the group said Wednesday. Russian authorities had denied the icebreaker Arctic Sunrise entry to the

"The Arctic Sunrise is a fully equipped icebreaker with significant experience of operating in these conditions, while the oil companies operating here are taking unprecedented risks in an area teeming with polar bears, whales, and other Arctic wildlife," she said.

Russia's Northern Sea Route Administration, which has turned down all three applications that

that ice-breakers such as Arctic Sunrise receive.

The Transport Ministry did not comment on Greenpeace's allegation of the political nature of the refusal. The ministry said that it had not received any more applications from the environmental group.

Greenpeace said it wanted to "expose" the offshore activities of Rosneft and U.S. partner ExxonMobil in the Kara Sea, north of



The Greenpeace ship 'Arctic Sunrise' is seen in the Gulf of Mexico. Russia has blocked a Greenpeace ship from entering Arctic waters where the environmentalist group was planning to protest against oil exploration activities by Rosneft and ExxonMobil, the group said Wednesday Aug. 21, 2013. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

Northern Sea Route, citing questions over the vessel's ice strengthening, Greenpeace said in a statement. It said the Arctic Sunrise has a higher ice classification than many of the more than 400 vessels that have been granted access to the Northern Sea Route this year.

"This is a thinly veiled attempt to stifle peaceful protest and keep international attention away from Arctic oil exploration in Russia," Greenpeace campaigner Christy Ferguson said in a statement sent to The Associated Press.

Greenpeace has lodged this summer, referred calls seeking comment to the Transport Ministry. The Transport Ministry told the AP in an emailed statement that the application did not comply with the most recent Russian regulations. The ministry said that Greenpeace's most recent application did not include "information about the ice belt breadth, which was the reason for the refusal." Greenpeace said the issue had not been raised before and insisted that there is no such term in the ice class certificate

western Siberia. The companies are preparing to begin drilling operations there next year.

Greenpeace and other environmentalists have warned that drilling in the remote and icy Arctic could lead to devastating spills, threatening fish and wildlife already under pressure from climate change. Greenpeace activists have scaled offshore platforms in waters off Greenland and northern Russia in recent years, stunts that were carried out to draw attention to the oil industry's move into the Arctic. □

Activists scuffle with Swedish police over mining

JOKKMOKK, Sweden (AP)

— Police have removed some 50 screaming and singing activists who were blocking a road in northern Sweden to protest a British company's plans to build an iron ore mine.

Beowulf Mining aims to start test-blasting for a po-

tential mine in the dense woods where Sweden's indigenous Sami population herd their reindeers.

Police spokesman Rone Norstrom says around eight people were briefly detained Wednesday on suspicion of crimes such as resisting arrest and tres-

passing.

He says one man was transported to a doctor after he doused himself with gasoline and threatened to set himself ablaze.

There are about 80,000 Sami people living in northern Scandinavia, including some 20,000 in Sweden. □

CARIBBEAN NEWS BRIEFS

Puerto Rico to build \$54M water treatment plant

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Puerto Rico's governor says construction has started on a \$54 million water treatment plant that will serve the U.S. territory's central eastern region. Alejandro Garcia Padilla says the plant will filter 7 million gallons (26.5 million liters) of water a day and begin operating in September 2016. He said this week that the plant is expected to provide long-awaited potable water to 22,000 families. Garcia says a second phase will see construction of a \$300 million reservoir capable of storing more than 3 billion gallons (11 billion liters) of water. Both projects are expected to create more than 3,000 jobs. □

Guyana's embattled minister to lead ruling party

GEORGETOWN, Guyana (AP) — Guyana's ruling party has chosen the country's embattled national security minister as its new general secretary. Clement Rohee was elected to the position with the People's Progressive Party after it was vacated by the president of the South American country, Donald Ramotar, who quit citing work conflicts. Rohee was appointed to the party post this week even as opposition legislators demanded that he be fired as national security minister following a July 2012 protest in which police fatally shot three people and injured 20 others. Rohee has been a Cabinet member for 20 years, and Ramotar has defended him as one of his best ministers. □

U.N. condemns violence directed at gays in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — The United Nations mission in Haiti is condemning acts of hatred and violence aimed at homosexuals in the Caribbean nation. The statement comes after a gay couple was recently attacked at an engagement party. People threw stones and burned cars. More than a thousand people showed up for a demonstration last month in the capital to protest homosexuality and a proposal to legalize gay marriage in Haiti. Haiti's gay and lesbian community is small and has long kept a low-profile because of a strong social stigma that sparks fears of physical violence and loss of employment. □

Crime spiking in western area of Jamaica capital

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP) — Jamaican police are concerned about a recent uptick of violence in a patchwork of slums in the capital. A statement this week says police intelligence suggests people claiming to be relatives of well-known gangsters who used to hold sway over West Kingston "have become involved in a deadly battle for control of the community." Police say there has been a recent rash of murders, shootings and robberies in West Kingston. They have deployed more officers there. Authorities want to maintain gains in lowering Jamaica's violent crime rate. Last year, police recorded 1,087 killings, the lowest number in nine years. □

Puerto Rico's unemployment rate inching higher

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Puerto Rico's unemployment rate has risen slightly for the first time this year after five months of continuous decline. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics says the U.S. territory's rate was 13.5 percent in July. Puerto Rico's unemployment rate was 14.6 percent at the beginning of the year and had been steadily dropping until July. The island of 3.7 million people has the highest unemployment rate compared with any U.S. state. Federal officials also reported this week that the number of people on nonfarm payrolls in Puerto Rico also dropped in July to 892,700, compared with 934,300 in July 2012. □



Downtown area renovations continue:

Madiki receives final touches after surpassing all obstacles

ORANJESTAD – While standing next to Aruba's Prime Minister Mike Eman earlier this week, Minister of Infrastructure Benny Sevinger showed the local press the tremendous work put into the first phase of the renovation of the Madiki neighborhood in Downtown Oranjestad. The enhancement of this area is in the hands of Better Infrastructure Company (BIC) N.V. and has nearly completed the first phase after confronting and surpassing many obstacles with the asphalt. Now only the installation of small final touches like plants, light poles and speed bumps are to be made.

"When we started the first phase, we encountered many old pipes that had to be replaced; this was the initial setback. Then we had a problem with the lack of available asphalt on Aruba. Little by little the obstacles were surpassed and today we can say the project is practically finished," stated Minister



Sevinger, "This was a good experience as it has given all parties involved includ-

ing contractors, InfraTeam and Department of Public Works (DOW) a better

preparation for the next phase of the project."

"There have been many petitions made requesting speed bumps by residents of Madiki, even though they were included in original plan. It seems that despite the roads being narrowed and now one-way, irresponsible drivers continue to drive at high speeds in this residential neighborhood," stated Sevinger.

"The residents have expressed their concerns with petitions requesting "sleeping police," Minister Sevinger explained that DOW is implementing these speed bumps into the design of the project, "In the most recent days, we have received numerous petitions from all neighborhoods because drivers continue to speed in residential neighborhoods. DOW is actually working on prefabricated

crosswalks that are actually wider than sleeping police, which will eliminate the need to change any traffic laws."

"LED lights will also be installed to increase the safety and security in Madiki, as has already been done in other neighborhoods on the island.

We are waiting for the next shipment to arrive in order to continue the work and the Madiki neighborhood will receive these lights," Sevinger remarked. Much of the foliage has already been planted including fruit trees, flowers and to provide shady areas on different streets of the first phase. The second phase will begin soon in the neighborhood of Anglo Kleuter-school to Driemasterstraat and then cross the street to continue with Paradijs and Bushiri. □



SushiSamba entertains local athletes

PALM BEACH - Members of Cross Aruba, a gym promoting strength and conditioning, convened for their weekly outing at SushiSamba where they feasted on superb sushi made by the island's most experienced sushi chef. The athletes who are all health-fanatics agree that the classic and tropical sushi served at SushiSamba uses only the finest ingredients and is priced reasonably. SushiSamba recently debuted within one of the



Island's most unique dining experiences, at Amazonia Churrascaria on

Palm Beach, offering the Art of Sushi, with a menu filled with top grade fresh catch, prepared by an expertly trained master chef, in plain view of diners. The energy and spirit of SushiSamba's menu is also



reflected in the spectacular décor with painting and prints by famous local artist Eliza Lejuez, and the sound of the latest Brazilian music. Amazonia, a Brazilian steakhouse, lends itself as the perfect cohabitant for SushiSamba. The Brazilian coalition of both, now

offers diners the opportunity to enjoy their beef AND their tuna served exactly to their liking. SushiSamba features appetizers such as Miso Soup and Shrimp Tempura, cold dishes such as Tuna Tataki and the Samba Salad house specialty, Rolls and Hand Rolls, as well as a number of signature rolls with Rainbow, Dragon, Amazonia & Guarana among them. The culinary repertoire of SushiSamba now includes more than fifteen types of tender Sushi or Sashimi, listing all your favorites among them. With equal parts of imagination and freshness, the Amazonia & SushiSamba experience is truly unique; visit any evening, seven day a week. □



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Aruban dance studio receives "More Than Just Great Dancing" affiliation

NOORD - Club di Movimien-to has been accepted into the More Than Just Great Dancing international affiliation program, aligning the studio with a higher standard of dance instruction and management principles.

More Than Just Great Dancing is a community of dance studio owners committed to providing more than excellent dance instruction.

Founded by Misty Lown, owner of Misty's Dance Unlimited, the More Than Just Great Dancing license is based on the same principles Lown used to grow her own La Crosse, Wis., studio that today serves more than 700 dance students and has given out more than \$135,000 in scholarships.

The approach places the customer at the center of

the dance studio world and equips licensed studios to transform staff teaching and leadership skills, provide quality programs and curricula, employ best management practices and have a positive impact on their communities. As the only studio in the area to receive the license, Club di Movimiento principals may join other industry leaders in web seminars and teleconferencing discussions as well as connect with other studio owners to share ideas, drive industry innovations, and address challenges. Club di Movimiento was founded in 1997 in Bubali 76 B, Noord and today provides Classical Ballet, Jazz, Contemporary, Tap, Latin, Street Dance, Pilates and Fitness to more than 250 students ranging from 3 years and up. □

On Thursday, August 22, 2013:

Artist Demonstration at Caribbean Queen with Abigail Vrolijk



PALM BEACH - The Caribbean Queen store at the Palm Beach Plaza Mall is hosting an artist demonstration with its Caribbean Queen for August 2013, local artist Abigail Vrolijk, who will be working just in front of the store to demonstrate the creation of her beautifully designed bags and purses for sale in the store this month.

Born and raised in Aruba, Abigail has always maintained an interest in art. She remembers herself always doodling and painting from the time she was born, and later sewing and designing. Relying on her own imagination as a source of inspiration, Abigail also looks to nature for interesting forms and color combinations.

Having experimented with bathing-suit designs for both men and women, she now devotes her leisure time to the design of individual purses and bags. "Everybody has their own style," she states. "Everybody wants to express themselves in their own way. I love that. I realize we need to nurture our own individual style. And that's

why I make one-of-a-kind creations, for one-of-a-kind people." As a mother of two holding down a full-time job as an assistant accounting officer and studying law at the University of Aruba, she admits time is precious, but nevertheless her hobby is important to her. She is also pleased to see her daughter following in her artistic footsteps, making arts and

crafts a part of her life too. Abigail welcomes clients who wish to have a bag custom-designed, and encourages them to share their vision with her. You are welcome to browse Abigail Vrolijk's collection and see her in action, at Caribbean Queen, Palm Beach Plaza Mall, on Thursday, August 22nd, 2013. □

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For Woods, still some work to do this year

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

JERSEY CITY, New Jersey

(AP) — This might be the best way to measure Tiger Woods' season. Sam Snead is getting more attention than Jack Nicklaus. Woods said again Wednesday at The Barclays this already has been a great season, and it's difficult to argue. His five wins — including two World Golf Championships and The Players Championship — are three more than anyone else on the PGA Tour. He is leading all the right indicators, such as the Vardon Trophy for the lowest scoring average,

the money list (\$2.6 million more than anyone else) and the No. 1 seed going into the FedEx Cup playoffs that start Thursday.

The standard for Woods, however, always has been the majors, and he was shut out for the fifth straight year.

"His lack of winning a major is the only thing talked about, which I think is sad," Bill Haas said. "I think it's ignorant. But that's what we are basing his year on. He may even say, 'Oh, I'm disappointed because I didn't win a major.'

Continued on page 22



Tiger Woods hits a tee shot during the pro-am of The Barclays golf tournament at Liberty National Golf Club in Jersey City, N.J., on Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013. Woods did not play the back nine of his pro-am round on because his neck and back were stiff in the morning and he attributed it to a soft bed in his hotel.

Associated Press

WNBA Roundup

Delle Donne returns, leads Sky past Mystics 79-73

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Elena Delle Donne scored 24 points and Sylvia Fowles added 16 points and 15 rebounds as the Chicago Sky moved closer to their first playoff berth with a 79-73 win over the Washington Mystics on Tuesday night.

Courtney Vandersloot had a season-high 19 points and seven assists for the Sky, who rallied back from a double-digit deficit for the second straight game. The Eastern Conference leaders can secure a post-season appearance with a win against New York on Friday.

Kia Vaughn scored a season-high 21 points for the Mystics (12-15), losers of two straight. Seattle 77, Los Angeles 57

Temeka Johnson scored nine of her 18 points during a key eight-minute stretch in the second half at Se-



Seattle Storm's Tina Thompson, right, drives the lane in front of Los Angeles Sparks' Marissa Coleman in the second half of a WNBA basketball game Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2013, in Seattle. The Storm won 77-57. Associated Press

attle as the Storm pulled away in the fourth quarter. Tina Thompson added 17 points and 10 rebounds as the Storm (12-13) outscored the Sparks 14-4 in the final period.

Atlanta 88, Minnesota 75
At Atlanta, Tiffany Hayes scored 23 points to help the home team recover after squandering a 17-point lead in the first half. WNBA scoring leader Angel McCoughtry had 19 points and Erika de Souza added 16 points and 16 rebounds as Atlanta scored the first 10 points of the fourth quarter and went on to its third straight win — all at home. Maya Moore made four of five 3-pointers and led Minnesota with 23 points. Rebekkah Brunson had 16 points and 14 rebounds for the Lynx, who remained

one-half game ahead of Los Angeles for the Western Conference lead. Phoenix 89, Tulsa 86

At Tulsa, Diana Taurasi had 28 points and 10 assists and Candice Dupree added 20 points and 10 rebounds as Phoenix held off the hosts. Riquana Williams scored 23 points, Liz Cambage had 21 points and 13 rebounds, and Tiffany Jackson-Jones added 13 points for Tulsa. After the Shock trimmed Phoenix's 13-point lead to three with about 16 seconds to go, Taurasi made four free throws 5.5 seconds apart.

Williams made a 3 with 3.3 seconds left to pull the Shock to 88-86, and Griner hit a free throw less than a second later for the final margin. □

American Mardy Fish withdraws from U.S. Open

HOWARD FENDRICH

AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Former top-10 player Mardy Fish pulled out of the U.S. Open on Wednesday, the latest setback in his bid to make a comeback on tour after dealing with heart issues. The U.S. Tennis Association said the 31-year-old American cited “personal reasons” for his withdrawal. The draw for the year’s last Grand Slam tournament is Thursday, and play begins Monday. Fish’s Twitter feed carried this message Wednesday: “Friends, unfortunately my health won’t allow me to compete this year at the US Open. Thank you for all your support.” He has missed months of action at a time over the past two seasons. On Tuesday, Fish stopped playing in the third set of his match against Jarkko Nieminen at a hard-court tournament in Winston-Salem, N.C., because of heat stroke.

Fish has played only eight matches on the ATP World Tour in 2013, going 3-5. He skipped all of the Grand Slam tournaments this season while entering only five other events on the main tour. A year ago, Fish reached the fourth round at the U.S. Open but withdrew before he was to face Roger Federer at that stage, saying it was for “precautionary measures” on doctor’s orders. Fish missed about 2½ months earlier last season because of an accelerated heart-beat. The night after he lost a match at Key Biscayne, Fla., in March 2012, Fish’s heart started racing uncontrollably. That May, doctors induced extreme palpitations to try to pinpoint the problem. He returned for last year’s Wimbledon. During the hard-court tournament in Washington earlier this month, Fish spoke about the difficulties he’s faced the last two seasons.



Mardy Fish, of the United States, hits a backhand return to Jarkko Nieminen, of Finland, during the Winston-Salem Open tennis tournament, Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2013, in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Associated Press

“I struggled mightily during the U.S. Open last year. So those sort of post-traumatic experiences that I’ve had

— that I have now — are what I need to get over right now,” he said. “But it’s a process. It’s not an easy

game. And fitness is as big a part of it as playing, and sometimes that’s trouble — spells trouble — for me.” □

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Yasiel Puig's homer lifts Dodgers past Marlins 6-4

The Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — With his first swing of the night, Yasiel Puig ended a slump and silenced speculation he's in trouble. NL Capsules He came off the bench to hit a tiebreaking home run in the eighth inning and help the Los Angeles Dodgers beat the Miami Marlins 6-4 on Tuesday night.

Puig was held out of the starting lineup after going hitless in his past 11 at-bats. He also drew a fine when he arrived late for pregame drills, raising more questions about the 22-year-old's maturity and comportment.

He entered in the sixth inning in a double switch, batted for the first time leading off the eighth and needed only one pitch to break a 4-all tie.

The NL West leaders broke a two-game losing streak, their longest in two months. They won despite blowing a 4-1 lead and hitting into four double plays.

METS 5, BRAVES 3

NEW YORK (AP) — Rookie Zack Wheeler beat NL East-leading Atlanta for the third time, pitching shutout ball into the seventh inning and sending New York to victory.

Wheeler improved to 3-0 this year against the team with the best record in the majors. Helped by his mid-season promotion from Triple-A, the Mets hold an 8-7

edge over the Braves.

Marlon Byrd and Ike Davis homered and speedy Eric Young Jr. sparked the Mets, stealing two bases, scoring twice and making a diving catch in left field.

Catcher Travis d'Arnaud doubled for his first hit in the majors, ending an 0-for-10 rut.

Wheeler (6-2), raised in the Atlanta suburbs, defeated the Braves at Turner Field in his big league debut in June, then topped them at Citi Field in July.

ROCKIES 5, PHILLIES 3

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Troy Tulowitzki and Wilin Rosario homered to lead Colorado past Philadelphia.

Jorge De La Rosa (13-6) pitched into the seventh to win his third straight start. Dexter Fowler also drove in a run to help the Rockies jump out to a 5-0 lead.

Rockies third baseman Nolan Arenado made a fantastic backhanded stop and in-the-air throw to first in the seventh inning to rob Jimmy Rollins of a run-scoring hit.

Rafael Betancourt tossed a scoreless ninth for his 16th save.

Tyler Cloyd (2-3) allowed five runs in six innings in his first major league start since June 12.

DIAMONDBACKS 5, REDS 2
CINCINNATI (AP) — Paul Goldschmidt set a club record with his third grand slam of the season and be-



Los Angeles Dodgers' Yasiel Puig points skyward as he crosses home plate after hitting a home run in the eighth inning of a baseball game against the Miami Marlins, Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2013 in Miami. The Dodgers won 6-4.

Associated Press

came the first NL player to drive in 100 runs, powering Arizona over Cincinnati. Goldschmidt connected in the eighth inning off J.J. Hoover, ending the reliever's streak of 23 scoreless appearances. His 31st homer tied him with Pittsburgh's Pedro Alvarez for the NL lead. All of his career grand slams have come this season.

Left-hander Patrick Corbin (13-3) stymied Cincinnati's lefty-dominated lineup, pitching a six-hitter, including Chris Heisey's two-run homer, during his second complete game. Corbin

matched his career high with 10 strikeouts.

The left-hander shut down the Reds' left-handed threats — Shin-Soo Choo, Joey Votto and Jay Bruce were a combined 0 for 12 with seven strikeouts.

NATIONALS 4, CUBS 2

CHICAGO (AP) — Ryan Zimmerman had two hits and drove in a run, Bryce Harper had two hits and scored a crucial ninth-inning run, and Dan Haren pitched six strong innings to help Washington beat Chicago.

Zimmerman had two doubles and could have had

four hits as he lined out to third base in the third inning to start a double play and hit a hard shot at the center-fielder in the seventh.

Haren (8-11) kept the Cubs off-balance despite not throwing a pitch faster than 89 all night. Rafael Soriano gave up a leadoff homer to Donnie Murphy in the ninth before getting the last three outs for his 32nd save in 38 chances.

Cubs starter Chris Rusin (2-3) gave up two runs and 10 hits in 5 2-3 innings.

BREWERS 6, CARDINALS 3

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Kyle Lohse beat St. Louis for the first time this season and Sean Halton knocked in a career-high three runs to help lead Milwaukee to victory.

Lohse (9-8) beat the Cardinals in his fourth try this season and improved to 3-5 in nine outings overall against his former team.

Lohse left after six innings with the Brewers leading 6-3. He struck out four, walked two and allowed six hits and three runs, two coming on Yadier Molina's two-run homer in the fourth. Molina also doubled and scored in the second on Matt Adams' single.

John Axford and Brandon Kintzler each pitched a scoreless inning, and Jim Henderson pitched the ninth for his 19th save in 22 chances. □



In this March 5, 2013 file photo, Cleveland Indians starting pitcher Daisuke Matsuzaka throws against the San Francisco Giants during the second inning of a spring training baseball game in Scottsdale, Ariz. The Indians have released Matsuzaka. He is now a free agent.

Associated Press

TOM WITHERS
AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — The Indians released right-hand-

er Daisuke Matsuzaka on Tuesday at his request, giving the Japanese veteran a chance to catch on with

Cleveland Indians release Daisuke Matsuzaka

another team after failing to secure a spot in Cleveland's rotation.

Matsuzaka has spent the entire season at Triple-A Columbus after failing to win a spot in Cleveland's rotation during spring training. After working through early season injuries, Matsuzaka has pitched well in recent weeks, going 4-4 with a 3.56 ERA and 54 strikeouts in 10 starts for the Clippers since July 2. But with the Indians' rotation currently packed with solid starters, he's hoping to find work elsewhere for the stretch

run. "We didn't have an immediate major league opportunity for Daisuke," Cleveland general manager Chris Antonetti said in the dugout in Anaheim before the Indians' game against the Angels. "He had been throwing well in Triple-A, and thought that he may have a better opportunity elsewhere, so he asked for his release, and we granted it."

Antonetti said he isn't certain whether Matsuzaka already has a new destination lined up, but he has been speaking regularly

with Matsuzaka's agent, Scott Boras.

The Indians signed the 32-year-old Matsuzaka to a minor league deal in February after he spent six seasons with Boston, but Matsuzaka didn't make the 40-man roster. He was released before re-signing with Cleveland.

"Early in the season, there were a number of things that went wrong physically, where he got pushed back, so he was never really a candidate to pitch," said Indians manager Terry Francona. □

AL Capsules

Yankees rally for sweep of DH over the Blue Jays

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Jayson Nix hit a tying homer in the seventh inning and a game-ending single in the ninth, lifting the New York Yankees to their second comeback victory over the Toronto Blue Jays on Tuesday, 3-2 in the nightcap for a doubleheader sweep. In the opener, Robinson Cano and Chris Stewart each hit three-run homers to rally the Yankees from four runs down to an 8-4 win. Toronto lost slugger Jose

straight loss in New York. Stewart connected off Neil Wagner (2-4) in the sixth inning of the opener for his first homer since May 15 — that's 173 homerless at-bats — to put New York ahead. In the opener, Cano got his 200th career home run and Ivan Nova (7-4) got the win. INDIANS 4, ANGELS 1, 14 INNINGS ANAHEIM, California (AP) — Drew Stubbs hit a two-run homer in the 14th inning, and Cleveland out-

double, and Glen Perkins struck out Miguel Cabrera with two on for the final out to help Minnesota hold off Detroit. Mike Pelfrey (5-10) gave up three runs and seven hits in 6 2-3 innings. Jared Burton got out of a two-on, one-out jam in the eighth, and Perkins finished for his 29th save in 32 chances. Rick Porcello (9-7) allowed five runs and seven hits over 4 1-3 innings for Detroit.

The Twins were without All-Star Joe Mauer, who was scratched from his start at first when he experienced dizziness during batting practice.

RAYS 7, ORIOLES 4 BALTIMORE (AP) — Alex Cobb took a two-hitter into the seventh inning and Matt Joyce drove in three runs as Tampa Bay beat Baltimore for its sixth win in seven games.

Wil Myers had two hits and two RBIs for the Rays, who moved percentage points ahead of Boston for the AL East lead.

Cobb (8-2) was making his second start since being hit in the head by a line drive on June 15. He allowed two runs, one earned, three hits and four walks in six-plus innings.

Miguel Gonzalez (8-6) gave up three runs, two earned, eight hits and four walks in 5 2-3 innings for the Orioles. The right-hander is 0-3 in five starts since July 20.

WHITE SOX 2, ROYALS 0 KANSAS CITY (AP) — John Danks shut down Kansas City's scuffling offense for eight innings, and Chicago did just enough damage against Ervin Santana to squeak out a victory.

Danks (3-10) ended an eight-start winless streak by scattering seven hits and a walk. That the veteran left-hander's finest start of the season came against the Royals wasn't much of a surprise: Danks improved to 5-0 against them in 13 career starts.

Addison Reed worked around a leadoff single in the ninth for his 32nd save. It wrapped up the first shut-

out win for the last-place White Sox since a 3-0 victory against the Angels on May 17.

Gordon Beckham homered off Santana (8-7) in the first inning for the only earned run.

MARINERS 7, ATHLETICS 4 OAKLAND, California (AP) — Nick Franklin hit a home run and drove in three runs and the Mariners rallied from a four-run deficit to

beat the Athletics.

Brad Miller and Kendrys Morales also drove in runs for the Mariners, who won for just the third time in 53 games when trailing after seven innings. Josh Donaldson and Nate Freiman each hit a home run for the A's, who dropped 1 1-2 games behind the AL West-leading Texas Rangers. Derek Norris also drove in a run for the A's. □



New York Yankees' Jayson Nix hits the game-winning RBI single in the ninth inning to lift the Yankees to a 3-2 win over the Toronto Blue Jays in the second baseball game of a doubleheader at Yankee Stadium, Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2013, in New York.
Associated Press

Bautista to a sore hip early in the opener.

Cano had an RBI single in the second game and had six hits and five RBIs in the two games.

Ichiro Suzuki singled and doubled in the first game, leaving him one shy of 4,000 combined hits during his careers in Japan and the major leagues.

Darren Oliver (3-4) walked Mark Reynolds to start the ninth. Suzuki pinch ran and advanced on Eduardo Nunez's sacrifice bunt. Suzuki stole third before scoring on Nix's line drive to left that gave the Yankees their eighth win in 11 games.

Mariano Rivera (4-2) worked out of a two-on jam in the top of the ninth for the win. Anthony Gose failed to get down a sacrifice bunt in the top of the ninth.

The Blue Jays extended their record with an 11th

lasted Los Angeles to gain ground in the AL playoff race.

Lonnie Chisenhall got the Indians going with a one-out single in the 14th off Joe Blanton (2-14), the Angels' seventh pitcher. Stubbs, the Indians' No. 9 hitter, was 0 for 4 with a walk before connecting for his first homer since July 4.

Michael Bourn then singled and scored from second on Blanton's throwing error for the Angels, who have lost eight of 10. Los Angeles stranded 17 runners — 13 after the sixth inning, including two in the final frame.

Carlos Santana hit a tying homer in the seventh for the Indians, who managed just four hits in the first 12 innings.

TWINS 6, TIGERS 3 DETROIT (AP) — Justin Morneau had a season-high four hits, including a two-run homer and a two-run

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MON - THURS 4:15 | 6:40 | 9:05
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AARON TAYLOR-JOHNSON | CHLOE GRACE MORETZ

KICK-ASS 2

R

MON - THURS 9:30
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LIAM HEMSWORTH | HARRISON FORD

PARANOIA

WITH DUTCH SUBTITLES

PG-13

MON - FRI 4:40 | 7:05
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MATT DAMON | JODIE FOSTER

ELYSIUM

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

R

MON - THURS 4:30 | 6:55 | 9:25
FRI 4:30 | 6:55 | 9:25 | 11:50
SAT 2:05 | 4:30 | 6:55 | 9:25 | 11:50
SUN & HOL 2:05 | 4:30 | 6:55 | 9:25

DENZEL WASHINGTON | MARK WAHLBERG

2GUNS

R

MON - THURS 9:20
FRI & SAT 9:20 | 11:50
SUN & HOL 9:20

VERA FARMIGA | PATRICK WILSON

THE CONJURING

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

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MON - THURS 4:30 | 7:00 | 9:35
FRI 4:30 | 7:00 | 9:35 | 12:05
SAT 2:00 | 4:30 | 7:00 | 9:35 | 12:05
SUN & HOL 2:00 | 4:30 | 7:00 | 9:35

DANE COOK | STACY KEACH

Disney
PLANES

PG

MON - FRI 4:50 | 7:10
SAT, SUN & HOL 2:40 | 4:50 | 7:10

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THE SMURFS 2

3D VERSION WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PG

MON - FRI 4:05 | 6:25 | 8:50
SAT, SUN & HOL 1:55 | 4:05 | 6:25 | 8:50

Paul elected president of NBA players union

W.G. RAMIREZ
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Los Angeles Clippers star Chris Paul was elected president of the NBA players' association Wednesday, replacing Derek Fisher.

The vote by NBA player representatives came six months after the union fired Billy Hunter as executive director. Hunter countered with a wrongful-termination lawsuit in May, accusing Fisher of conspiring with NBA officials during the 2011 lockout.

Paul was a vice president on the executive committee for the past four years. Roger Mason Jr. was elected first vice president to

replace Jerry Stackhouse, who resigned from the office and is expected to take a position within the union. □



Los Angeles Clippers' Chris Paul watches play from the sidelines during the USA Basketball Showcase game, Thursday, July 25, 2013, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

Querrey edges Nieminen in Winston-Salem Open

WINSTON-SALEM, North Carolina (AP) — American Sam Querrey edged Finland's Jarkko Nieminen 4-6, 7-6 (7), 7-6 (12) on Wednesday to advance to the Winston-Salem Open quarterfinals.

Querrey had 19 aces, but lost the first set to the left-handed Nieminen after leading 4-1. Querrey then had to overcome five match points in the third-set tiebreaker to advance to his fourth tournament quarterfinals this season.

"I just played some sloppy points (in the first set)," Querrey said. "I missed a few when I was up 4-2, and I missed some easy forehands later on. That kind of got me down, and it took a while for me to get back



Jarkko Nieminen, of Finland, hits a forehand return to Mardy Fish, of the United States, during the Winston-Salem Open tennis tournament, Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2013, in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Associated Press

into it.

"That was just a lack of confidence right out of the gate ... but I knew that if I could get into a tiebreaker, I could win my serve and grind out a few points on his serve."

The 29th-ranked Querrey will face unseeded Ricardas Berankis of Lithuania, a 6-3, 6-3 winner over Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut.

"It's always painful to lose a tight match," Nieminen said. "When it got to 6-6 (in the third-set tiebreaker), I saw that he looked tired. That's when I stopped playing the way I did before, and missed some shots. I wanted to make him run, but I should have gone for my shots like I did before."

Woods

Continued from page 18

But he's not winning the smaller events. He's winning the WGCs and Bay Hill. And yes, it makes what he's doing that much more impressive, absolutely."

Woods is stuck on 14 majors, leaving him four short of the Nicklaus standard. The five wins this year, after three wins in 2012, has put him at 79 career wins, moving him closer to Snead's record 82 wins on the PGA Tour.

"I tell you what, I never thought I would ever get there this quick," Woods said. "It's been an amazing run to get here. One of the things I'm most proud of is winning five or more tournaments 10 years in there. That's one of the stats that I look at as one of the ones I'm really proud of. This is one of those years."

The next chance to add to his wins starts Thursday at The Barclays, the first of four FedEx Cup playoff events against some of the strongest fields of the year. Yes, the majors are over.

There is still plenty up for grabs — for Woods, British Open champion Phil Mickelson and even someone like Rory McIlroy.



Tiger Woods speaks to reporters after playing in the pro-am of The Barclays golf tournament at Liberty National Golf Club in Jersey City, N.J., on Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013.

Associated Press

Even though he has twice as many wins as anyone else, Mickelson could make a case for PGA Tour player of the year if he were to win a playoff or event (or two), particularly the FedEx Cup and its \$10 million prize. Despite two decades of greatness and a spot in the World Golf Hall of Fame, Mickelson has never won player of the year, a money title or the Vardon Trophy.

Haas didn't hesitate when asked who had the best

year — Woods.

Neither did Masters champion Adam Scott.

"It's hard to pass up looking at five wins," Scott said. "I think the next best guy might have two, is that right? That's a great year to win that many times. It's all personal opinion. If you think winning a major is what you base success on, then if you haven't (won), you haven't had a great year. But winning ... I've always based it around winning events, and I don't

think one major makes up for five tournaments."

That led to another question posed to Scott: Would he trade seasons with Woods?

"I'd rather have mine, that's for sure," said Scott, who collected his first major at Augusta National. "He may want mine. I mean, No. 15 is proving to be difficult for him, so that would have given him that. But they've all got to get tougher the more you get." Woods only played

nine holes of his pro-am Wednesday at Liberty National, the course along the Hudson River across from the Statue of Liberty. He experienced stiffness in his neck and back from what he attributed to a soft bed in his hotel, and Woods decided only to chip and putt on the back nine as a precaution.

It was the latest nagging injury this year — a tweaked back during the final round of the PGA Championship, an elbow injury in the summer that caused him to miss two tournaments — though Woods was not concerned and said he was fine during his week off at home in Florida.

He is facing one of the toughest fields in the year featuring the top 125 players on the PGA Tour, all of whom are in form, some of whom are desperate to go as far as they can in these lucrative FedEx Cup playoffs. Only the top 100 advance next week to the Deutsche Bank Championship.

McIlroy has an easier time defining his season to date. It hasn't been very good. He jokes with caddie J.P. Fitzgerald that he effectively has taken six months off, and now it's time to get to work. □

Facebook aims to get the world online

BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Food, water and the Internet? Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg wants to get all of the world's 7 billion people online through a partnership with some of the largest mobile technology companies. He says the Web is an essential part of life, and everyone deserves to be connected, whether they live in Norway, Nicaragua or Namibia.

"The Internet not only connects us to our friends, families and communities, but it is also the foundation of the global knowledge economy," Zuckerberg wrote in a paper posted to his Facebook page late Tuesday. The title asks "Is Connectivity A Human Right?"

Of course, connecting more people to the Internet is the kind of philanthropy that would create more potential Facebook users, which would also help boost the company's bottom line.

"There's nothing wrong with that," said Fordham University communications professor Paul Levinson, author of "New New Media."

"I think it is actually a profoundly important human right in the 21st century to have access to the Internet."

To get there, Facebook Inc. on Wednesday announced a partnership called Internet.org. It includes the world's biggest social network, plus Korean electronics giant Samsung, Finnish handset maker Nokia and wireless chip maker Qualcomm Inc. More companies are expected to join.

Facebook said the group's goal is to "make Internet access available to the two-thirds of the world who are not yet connected" — about 5 billion people.

Levinson called the venture "profoundly humanistic, while adding that "at the same time, I would never say that Facebook is run by angels."

If the effort pays off, Face-

book will grow its user base, advertising revenue and influence. Business and philanthropy, in this case, can go hand in hand, Levinson said. The group's plans, still in an early, rough-draft phase, include developing cheaper smartphones and tools that would reduce the amount of data required to run mobile applications. For Facebook, the move would certainly add more users to its current 1.15 billion, and with them more advertising revenue. Still, Zuckerberg paints the effort as something larger. "For nine years, we've been on a mission to connect the world. We now connect more than 1 billion people, but to connect the next 5 billion we must solve a much bigger problem: the vast majority of people don't have access to the Internet," Zuckerberg wrote. He points out that the people who already use Facebook "have way more money than the rest of the world combined." That means it may "not actually be profitable for us to serve the next few billion people for a very long time, if ever. But we be-

lieve everyone deserves to be connected."

Most of Facebook's users live outside the U.S., and much of the site's new user base will come from developing countries in the years ahead. And while most Americans first got online using desktop computers, many of the Internet's newest users are bypassing PCs entirely, relying on mobile phones instead. Javier Olivan, vice president of growth and analytics at Facebook, said Facebook's move continues what the company has already been doing to get more people online.

This includes "Facebook For Every Phone," an app that launched in 2011 to let people with simple, non-smartphones use Facebook.

Facebook says it has invested more than \$1 billion so far to connect people in the developing world to the Internet.

The Internet.org project is Zuckerberg's latest venture that seeks to meld philanthropy with ambition.

The billionaire CEO made his first charitable splash in 2010, two years before



In this Thursday, March 7, 2013 file photo, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg speaks at the company's headquarters in Menlo Park, Calif.

Associated Press

his company went public, when he donated \$100 million in Facebook Inc. stock to Newark, New Jersey, schools. He later gave another \$500 million to a Silicon Valley charity with the aim of funding health and education issues. Earlier this year, he launched Fwd.us, a political group aimed at changing immigration policy, boosting education and encouraging investment in scientific research.

Wireless equipment com-

pany Ericsson, Web browser developer Opera Software and MediaTek, another wireless semiconductor company, are also founding members of Internet.org. Google Inc., which is not a part of the Internet.org effort, launched a similar undertaking earlier this year with the goal of getting everyone on Earth online. Called Project Loon, the effort launched Internet-beaming antennas aloft on giant helium balloons. □

Google and NFL meet; Sunday Ticket up for grabs?

SARAH SKIDMORE SELL
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Oregon (AP)

— Google has been holding talks with the National Football League, raising speculation that the internet monolith is seeking new inroads into television. Other tech companies like Apple are reportedly in talks with cable providers to boost access to blockbuster television shows through their devices.

With Google sitting on a cash pile of \$48 billion, the league's Sunday Ticket Package is easily within its reach. The package provides fans with access to most out-of-market NFL games not televised nationally on ESPN or on NBC. Earlier this year, Google Chief Financial Officer Patrick Pichette said, "It serves the shareholder best to ac-



In this Nov. 20, 2011, file photo, an NFL logo is displayed on the Ford Field turf before an NFL football game between the Detroit Lions and the Carolina Panthers in Detroit.

Associated Press

tually have that strategic ability to pounce" when there is the opportunity to make a major acquisition. The NFL confirmed its meetings with Google Wednesday, but declined to discuss the nature of those

talks, as did Google.

"Members of our office meet often with innovative leaders in Silicon Valley and around the world," the NFL said in a statement. "We are constantly looking for ways to make our

game better on the field, in the stadium and for fans."

The contract is currently held by DirecTV, which pays about \$1 billion annually for the rights. That contract, however, expires at the end of the 2014 season. Citi analyst Jason Bazinet believes that DirecTV is losing money on the deal, generating only about \$725 million a year in revenue. He believes a new contract would run about \$1.5 billion if DirecTV were to make another go for it.

DirecTV has a market capitalization of about \$32 billion and would be unlikely to remain for long in a bidding war with Google, which has a market capitalization nine times that. Bazinet believes DirecTV investors would welcome the prospect of letting the NFL go. □

Fed inches closer to easing stimulus, but timing is unclear

NELSON D. SCHWARTZ
© 2013 New York Times

Despite new concerns that economic growth may prove disappointing in the second half of 2013, Federal Reserve policymakers were edging closer to scaling back their huge economic stimulus efforts, ac-

cording to the official summary of their last meeting. But they did not yet have a consensus on the timing of their actions.

The minutes of the central bank's Federal Open Market Committee meeting late last month, released Wednesday, showed hints

that some committee members were more comfortable with easing back sooner rather than later on the Fed's program of purchasing \$85 billion a month in government bonds and mortgage-backed securities.

In June, Fed Chairman

Ben S. Bernanke indicated that the stimulus program could be scaled back later this year if economic data continued to be positive, but he left investors guessing as to whether that might begin as soon as September or be delayed until December or even later.

While "a few members emphasized the importance of being patient and evaluating additional information before deciding on any changes to the pace of asset purchases," a few others "suggested that it might soon be time to slow somewhat the pace of purchases," the summary of the July 30-31 meeting said.

Still, it was clear from the minutes that big doubts remained about the economy's underlying strength, and any change in policy remained contingent on the economic data that will come out before their next meeting on Sept. 17-18.

Despite continued strength in housing and auto sales, a number of participants

indicated "that they were somewhat less confident about a near-term pickup in economic growth than they had been in June."

"Tapering is certainly on their minds, but they don't want to lock themselves in," Dean Maki, chief U.S. economist at Barclays, said in an interview before the release of the minutes.

He noted that, to achieve the Fed's annual forecast of growth for 2013, the economy would have to expand at 3.25 to 3.5 percent in the second half of 2013.

Few observers expect that to happen, although the growth is expected to be better than the 1.4 percent rate of the first half of 2013. Since Bernanke and the Federal Reserve first indicated that stimulus efforts might be eased, trading in both developed countries and in emerging markets has been volatile.

The asset purchases and ultralow interest rates made it too cheap to borrow in many countries, while also propping up stock markets around the world. □



Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke at a news conference in Washington. The Federal Reserve appears on track to slow its bond purchases by the end of this year if the economy continues to improve. But it remains divided over the exact timing of the move. That's the message from the minutes of the Fed's July 30-31 meeting released Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013.

(Doug Mills/The New York Times)

Dow sinks for sixth day as traders ponder Fed exit

KEN SWEET
AP Markets Writer
NEW YORK (AP) —

Stocks fell sharply Wednesday after the Federal Reserve disclosed that its top officials were mostly in agreement that the central bank should end its massive bond-buying program.

The Dow Jones industrial average lost just over 100 points, giving the index its longest losing streak in more than a year. The Dow has fallen 4.9 percent since hitting a record high on Aug. 2.

In the minutes from Fed's July policy meeting, board members said it "might soon be time" to slow the purchases. The bond-buying program has been in place in one form or another since late 2008 to keep interest rates low and encourage economic growth.

Traders have been worried

about weak earnings and have been looking for clarity on how and when the Fed will wind down its bond purchases. Some investors believe the Fed's bond-buying have inflated stock prices.

Brad McMillan, chief investment officer for Commonwealth Financial, said the market had been overreacting to the possibility that the Fed is going to taper off its bond purchases.

"The market is starting to realize that, yeah, the taper is going to happen and, maybe, it won't be the end of the world," he said.

The Dow fell 105.44 points, or 0.7 percent, to 14,897.55. The index has fallen for six straight days for the first time since July 2012.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 9.55 points, or 0.6 percent, to 1,642.80. The Nasdaq composite lost 13.80 points, or 0.4 percent,

to 3,599.79.

Guy Berger, U.S. economist with RBS Securities, said the Fed minutes were mostly in line with what the market had expected.

"The minutes are very consistent with what Fed members have been saying since June," when Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke first laid out the idea of pulling back on bond purchases, Berger said.

The Fed has been purchasing \$85 billion in bonds per month since December. Berger expects the Fed may reduce that to \$65 billion in bonds per month after the central bank meets in September.

"August's employment report will be very important," he said.

Bond yields have risen dramatically the last few weeks as investors anticipate the end of the Fed's program.



Specialist Jason Noffer, left, and trader Edward Curran work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Stocks fell sharply Wednesday after the Federal Reserve disclosed that its top officials were mostly in agreement that the central bank should end its massive bond-buying program.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note jumped sharply Wednesday, to 2.89 percent from 2.82 percent the day before. The 10-year note is

used as a benchmark to determine interest rates on many types of loans, from individual mortgages to borrowing by large corporations. □

STREET BRIEFS

Target 2Q profit drops 13 pct but tops Wall Street

NEW YORK (AP) — Target Corp. is reporting a 13 percent drop in second-quarter earnings as the discounter spent money on opening stores in Canada and dealt with cautious shoppers in the U.S. The U.S.-based discounter is offering a muted full-year outlook. Target says it earned \$611 million, or 95 cents per share, in the quarter ended Aug. 3. That compares with \$704 million, or \$1.06 per share, a year earlier. Excluding items, the retailer earned \$1.19 per share. Total revenue reached \$17.12 billion, up 2 percent from \$16.45 billion in the quarter. Analysts were expecting earnings of 96 cents per share on revenue of \$17.28 billion, according to FactSet. □

Malaysia Airlines reports more loss, predicts rebound

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia Airlines said Wednesday it is on track to become profitable by the end of next year because its business turnaround plan has gained momentum. The airline nevertheless reported a second straight quarterly loss for the three months through June. The quarterly net loss of 175.2 million ringgit (\$53 million) was largely due to foreign exchange fluctuations and was lower than a loss of 349 million ringgit (\$106 million) a year earlier. Operating revenue rose 12 percent to 3.6 billion ringgit (\$1.1 billion). For the first half of 2013, the company's net loss decreased 12.7 percent from the previous year to 454 million ringgit (\$138 million). Chief executive Ahmad Jauhari Yahya said the company is on track to "build sustainable profit hopefully by the end of 2014." The airline will announce plans later this year to purchase new planes as it will have to retire more than 40 old aircraft, he said. □

Lowe's rides housing recovery to higher 2Q profit

MOORESVILLE, North Carolina (AP) — Lowe's second-quarter net income rose 26 percent, buoyed by the U.S. housing market's ongoing recovery. The home-improvement chain's results beat Wall Street expectations. The company raised its full-year earnings and revenue forecasts Wednesday. The strong performance comes a day after rival Home Depot Inc.'s results also topped analysts' estimates.

The housing market has continued to improve. On Friday, the Commerce Department said builders began work on houses and apartments at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 896,000 in July. That was up 6 percent from June, though below a recent peak of more than 1 million in March. For the period ended Aug. 2, Lowe's earned \$941 million, or 88 cents per share. That's up from \$747 million, or 64 cents per share, a

year ago. Revenue increased 10 percent to \$15.71 billion from \$14.25 billion. Analysts surveyed by FactSet expected earnings of 79 cents per share on revenue of \$15.07 billion. Revenue at stores open at least a year climbed 9.6 percent. This metric is a key indicator of a retailer's health because it excludes results from stores recently opened or closed. Lowe's now anticipates fiscal 2013 earnings of about

\$2.10 per share, with revenue up approximately 5 percent. The company previously predicted earnings of about \$2.05 per share, with revenue up approximately 4 percent. Based on 2012's revenue of \$50.52 billion, the new outlook implies about \$53 billion in revenue. Wall Street expects earnings of \$2.10 per share on revenue of \$52.17 billion. Lowe's Cos. had 1,758 stores in the U.S., Canada and Mexico at quarter's end. □



Shoppers enter a Lowe's home improvement center in Springfield, Ill. Lowe's second-quarter net income rose 26 percent, buoyed by the U.S. housing market's ongoing recovery.

(AP Photo)

Heineken H1 profits fall on lower sales volumes

**TOBY STERLING
Associated Press**

AMSTERDAM (AP) — Heineken NV issued a gloomy earnings report Wednesday, saying first half profit fell 17 percent because of bad weather, weak "consumer sentiment" in Europe and the United States, and slowing growth in developing countries. Chief executive Jean Francois van Boxmeer said Wednesday the outlook for the second half is similar. "Although the volume trends have improved in July with the warm summer weather in Europe,



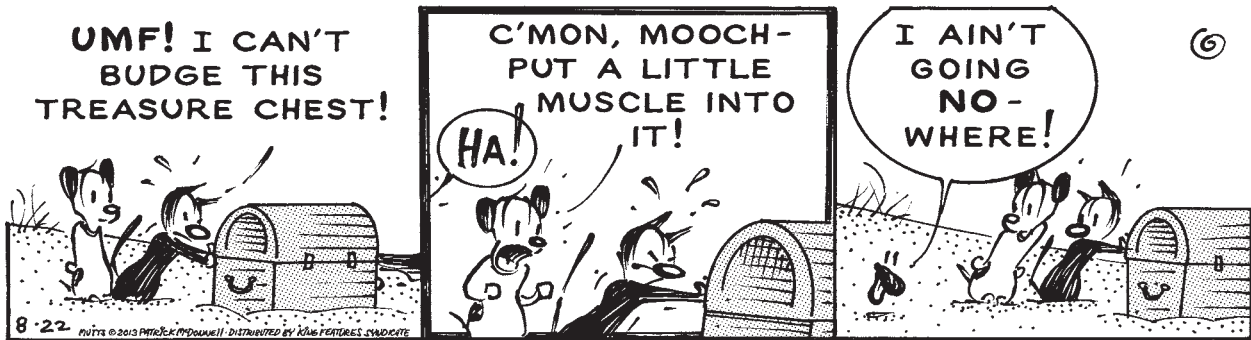
A worker unloads a truck delivering Heineken and Tiger beer to a pub before its opening hours in London. Heineken NV reported weak first-half earnings, Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2012, with margins hurt by rising costs, although the Dutch brewer did report an increase in sales and market share.

(AP Photo/Wong Maye-E.)

economic conditions in several of our core markets continue to constrain consumer spending," he said in a statement.

Net profit at the world's third-largest brewer was 639 million euros (\$858 million), down from 766 million euros a year ago. Revenues rose 3 percent to 10.4 billion euros, but that was due to Heineken's takeover of Asian Pacific Breweries, the maker of Tiger beer. Amsterdam-based Heineken bought the 58 percent stake in APB it didn't already own for 4.8 billion euros in November. □

Mutts



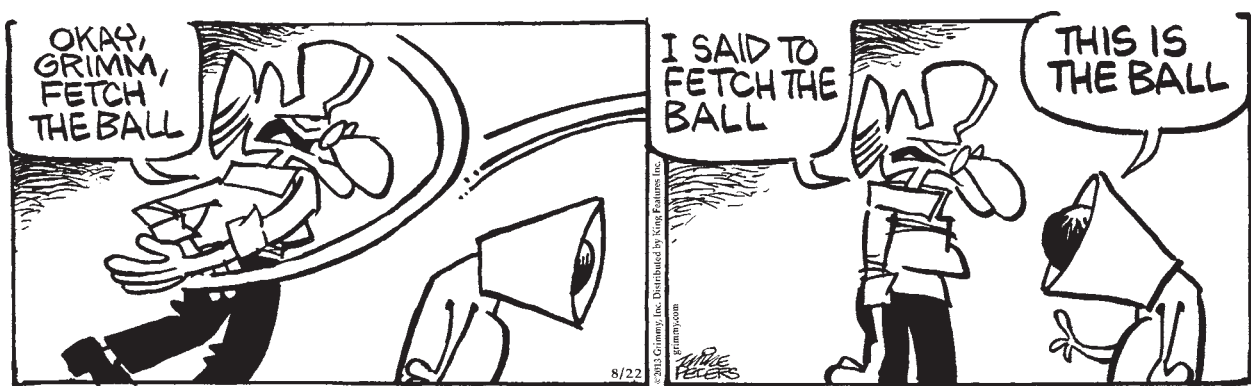
6 Chix



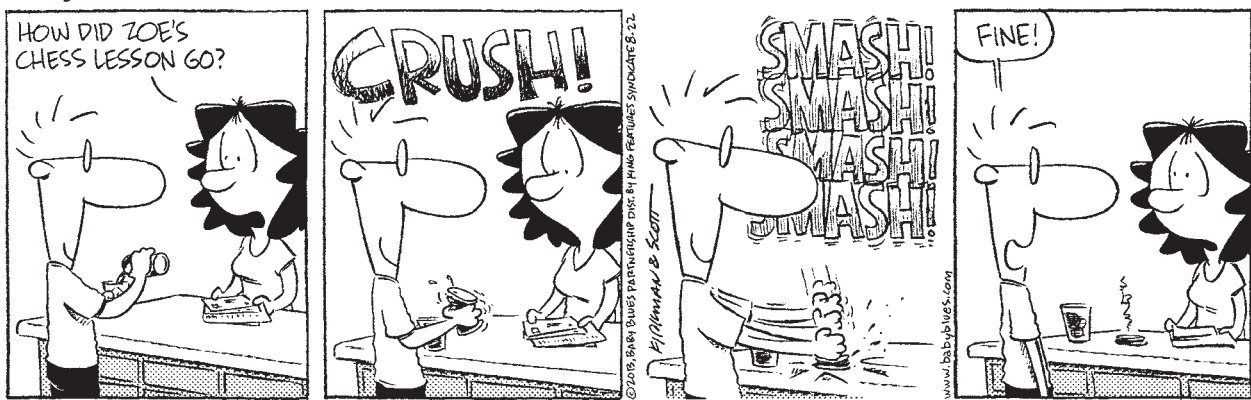
Blondie



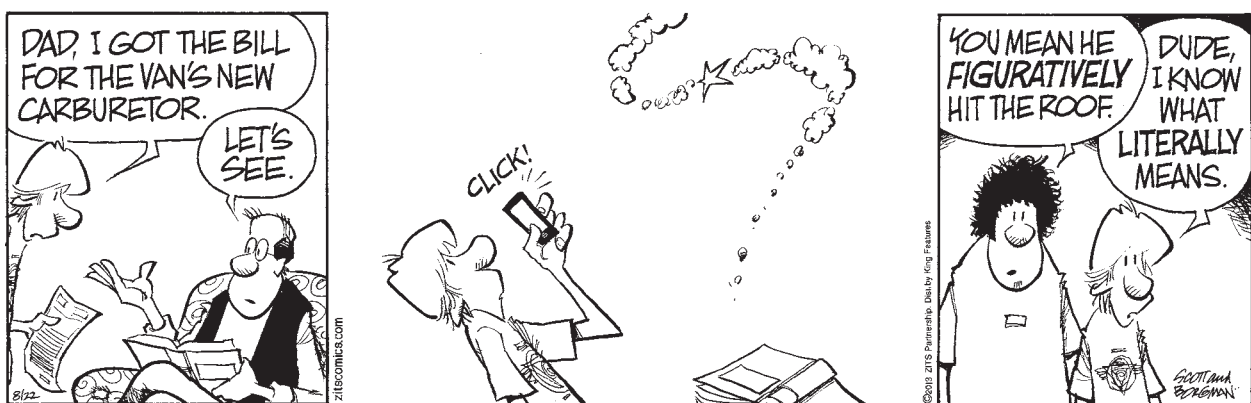
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

			7			
	9				8	
2		5	9		1	
	1		5	3		
3		4		7		5
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	4			7		
			8			

Difficulty Level ★★★

8/22

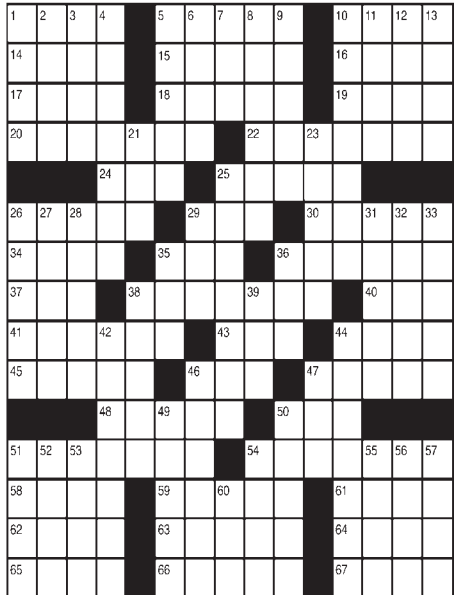
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

9	4	7	3	8	1	2	6	5
5	1	2	7	9	6	3	4	8
8	6	3	4	5	2	9	1	7
6	3	1	2	7	4	8	5	9
7	8	4	9	6	5	1	2	3
2	9	5	1	3	8	4	7	6
1	7	6	8	4	3	5	9	2
3	2	9	5	1	7	6	8	4
4	5	8	6	2	9	7	3	1

ACROSS

- 1 ___ and haws; hesitates
 - 5 Clickety-___
 - 10 ___ up; spends
 - 14 Declare openly
 - 15 Tori Spelling's dad
 - 16 Relocate
 - 17 Flooring piece
 - 18 Wall recess
 - 19 Tearful appeal
 - 20 Mrs. Roosevelt
 - 22 Spookiest
 - 24 Foot digit
 - 25 Stair piece
 - 26 Singing group of eight
 - 29 That woman
 - 30 Favas & limas
 - 34 Scorch
 - 35 Beanie or beret
 - 36 Largest nation
 - 37 Top columnist Thomas
 - 38 ___ of; withdraw all troops from
 - 40 Spider's creation
 - 41 Loan shark
 - 43 Highest spade
 - 44 Bridal veil fabric
 - 45 Bowling alley button
 - 46 Play a role
 - 47 More healthy
 - 48 Writer A.A. ___
 - 50 Bathroom feature, often
 - 51 Sowed
 - 54 Actress Kerr
 - 58 Dubuque, ___
 - 59 Zeal
 - 61 Become furious
 - 62 ___ if; although
 - 63 Barking marine mammals
 - 64 Hardly ___
 - 65 Take a break
 - 66 Piece of dining room furniture
 - 67 Actor ___ Foxx
- ## DOWN
- 1 Detest
 - 2 Wickedness



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

8/22/13

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

DATED	SHAM	CAST
AROSE	PERU	OHIO
MELTS	REEF	RENT
PALATIAL	FORAGE	
TINY	DIVIDED	
OFFEND	PINED	
WOE	YIELD	NOVEL
LOAD	AMEND	RAVE
STRIP	PATES	SET
SLATS	METERS	
ECSTASY	HORA	
VACANT	FINISHED	
IRON	EPIC	ASIDE
CROC	RISK	LEDGE
TYPE	NETS	SLEEP

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8/22/13

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 38 ___ four; fancy | 50 Coldly brief |
| pastry | 51 Dock |
| 39 Sept.'s follower | 52 Reason to wed |
| 42 Small part | 53 Astonishes |
| remaining | 54 Barbie, for one |
| 44 Worker | 55 Talk wildly |
| 46 NBC's Mitchell | 56 Elderly |
| 47 Long sandwich | 57 Group of cattle |
| 49 Minimum | 60 Smidgen |

Android vs. Siri: the voice-recognition sequel

DAVID POGUE

© 2013 New York Times

"Your review was the dumbest thing I've ever read. It strains me to avoid profanity in describing how stupid you sound."

That's the kind of email that brightened my day after I reviewed Google's Moto X phone two weeks ago.

My correspondents seemed especially unhappy with one sentence in that review: "Android's voice commands are still no match for Siri."

So I've just spent two weeks immersed in voice recognition. I carried an iPhone and a phone running Google's Android operating system with me everywhere. I spoke to both phones simultaneously. I wanted to get to know the differences, the strengths, the weaknesses.

When people talk about speech recognition, they mean, and often confuse, three different functions. There's dictation, where the phone converts speech to text; commands, where you operate the phone by talking; and Internet information searches. There are vast differences among the successes of the three. Dictation, for example, is still fairly poor on both systems. Both Android phones and Siri, the iPhone's speech feature, make many transcription errors. When you hear people bashing cell-phone transcription, declaring, "I gave up on it," they're usually referring to dictation.

That's forgivable, but come on. You're asking your phone to understand varying accents at varying distances from its microphone, in rooms with varying background noise. It's a wonder this feature works at all.

The latest Android version doesn't require an Internet connection to do basic dictation. And in Android, the words appear on the screen as you utter them; Siri doesn't transcribe until you stop talking.

On the other hand, Siri understands formatting controls like "capital," "all caps" and "no space," as well as all kinds of punc-

tuation - "colon," "dash," "asterisk," "ellipsis" and so on. Android understands only the basic symbols, like "period," "comma" and "exclamation point."

The second category, phone-control commands, is far more successful for far more people. This is when



The usefulness of speech recognition on smartphones running Google's operating system or Apple's depends on how it's used. (Stuart Goldenberg/The New York Times)

you say: "Call Mom," "Text Emily," "Wake me at 7:30," "Play some Billy Joel," "Remind me to feed the cat when I get home," and so on.

Here, Siri has the edge. As you're driving along, for example, and you hear the incoming message sound, you can say, "Read my new messages," and Siri reads them aloud. It even invites you to dictate a reply, without ever taking your eyes off the road. Android can't do that.

But Google's bread and butter is Web searches, so Android responses are generally much, much faster. (To try this speak-and-ye-shall-find business on an iPhone, download the Google Search app.)

Android is especially amazing at dialing places without having to look them up ("Call the Macy's on 34th Street") and directions ("Get me to La Guardia Airport by public transportation"), since its Map app is so unbelievably good. It's also smarter about connecting one question with another. If your first question was, "Who is Hillary Clinton?", you can follow up with, "Who is her husband?"

And Google has a built-in music-recognition feature, like the Shazam app. Tap the voice-recognition

icon, let the phone listen to whatever song is playing, and marvel as it instantly identifies the song and singer.

Unfortunately, Android has an Achilles' heel - actually, more like Achilles' entire leg. To issue spoken commands, you have to tap

the microphone icon on the Google search bar. And it's only on the home screen or the Google Now screen (swipe up from the bottom). So you can't speak commands when your phone is locked, or when you're in another app.

On the iPhone, you hold down the Home button or the clicker on your earbuds cord, so the voice command feature works when the phone is asleep or in any app.

In other words, to use an Android phone's speech features, you frequently have to pick it up, and you always have to look at it, which defeats much of the purpose.

The exception: Motorola's new phones, like the Moto X, can be set to listen all the time.

And then there's the issue of personality: Siri has it, Android doesn't. □

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Mosquitoes are worse this summer in parts of U.S.

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) -- The tiny mosquito all too often has man on the run. And this summer, it seems even worse than usual.

"You can't get from the car to inside our house without getting attacked, it's that bad," high school teacher Ryan Miller said from his home in Arlington, Va. Minutes earlier, he saw a mosquito circling his 4-month-old daughter - indoors.

Experts say it's been a bug-gier-than-normal summer in many places around the U.S. because of a combination of drought, heavy rain and heat.

It may be worst in the Southeast, which is getting hit with three years' worth of bugs in one summer, said Jonathan Day, who studies insects at the University of Florida.

Two years of drought were followed by incredibly heavy rain this year. During dry spells, mosquito eggs often didn't get wet enough to hatch. This year's rain revived those, along with the normal 2013 batch.

In parts of Connecticut this summer, mosquito traps had double the usual number of bugs. Minnesota traps in July had about triple the 10-year average. And in central California, traps had five times as many of one key species as the recent average.

Humans have been battling the blood-drinking bugs for thousands of years, and despite man's huge advantages in technology and size, people are not getting the upper hand. Just lots of bites on the hand.

"We have to keep fighting just to hold our own," said Tom Wilmot, past president



of the Mosquito Control Association and a Michigan mosquito control district chief. And in some places, he said, the mosquitoes are winning.

In southwestern Florida around Fort Myers, Lee County mosquito control was getting more than 300 calls per day from residents at times this summer, a much higher count than usual. But the more impressive tally was the number of bugs landing on inspectors' unprotected legs: more than 100 a minute in some hotspots, said deputy director Shelly Radovan. Across Florida near Vero Beach, Roxanne Connelly said there have been some days this month when she just wouldn't go in the backyard. It's been too bad even for her - and she's a mosquito researcher at the University of Florida and head of the mosquito association.

Many communities fight back by spraying pesti-

cides, but mosquitoes are starting to win that battle, too, developing resistance to these chemicals. Soon many places could be out of effective weapons, Connelly and other mosquito-fighters said.

Miller, who teaches environmental sciences, said he normally would oppose spraying but has been lobbying for the county to break out the pesticides this year. The county told him there was no money in the budget and recom-

mended he hire a private pest control business, he said.

The type that buzzed his daughter - the Asian tiger mosquito, named for its striped body - hit the U.S. a quarter-century ago in a batch of imported scrap tires in Houston and eventually spread to the Northeast, the Midwest and, in 2011, the Los Angeles area. Climate change is also likely to worsen mosquito problems in general because the insects tend

to do better in the hotter weather that experts forecast, said Chet Moore, a professor of medical entomology at Colorado State University.

Mosquitoes, of course, can be more than a nuisance: They can spread diseases. In the U.S., the biggest mosquito-borne threat is West Nile virus.

Last year, there were a record 286 West Nile deaths, but this year appears to be milder.

Worldwide outside the United States, mosquito-borne diseases kill far more people than sharks, snakes and bears combined, with more than 600,000 deaths from malaria each year in poorer countries.

People should wear light-colored clothing - dark colors attract mosquitoes - long pants and long sleeves; get rid of standing water, where mosquitoes breed; and use repellents with the chemical DEET, experts said.

But even those substances may not work for long. Mosquitoes could be developing resistance to repellents as well as insecticides, said mosquito researcher James Logan at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

"It's an arms race," he said. "I always think they are one step ahead of us." □

Study: MERS virus match seen in Saudi Arabian bat

MIKE STOBBE
AP Medical Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Scientists have found the mysterious MERS virus in a bat in Saudi Arabia. An international research team said the bat virus is an exact match to the first known human case of Middle East respiratory syndrome. The sample was collected from within a few miles (kilometers) of that patient's home.

But the researchers say the virus could have spread to people through other animals. Signs of MERS-like viruses have been reported in other animals, including camels.



This undated photo provided by EcoHealth Alliance via The Canadian Press on Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2013 shows a *taphozous perforatus* bat. Associated Press

Since it was identified last September, the respiratory illness has sickened nearly 100 people, most of them in Saudi Arabia and the

Middle East. About half of them died.

The journal Emerging Infectious Diseases released the study online Wednesday. □

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Group finds movies lag behind TV in LGBT roles

JOCELYN NOVECK

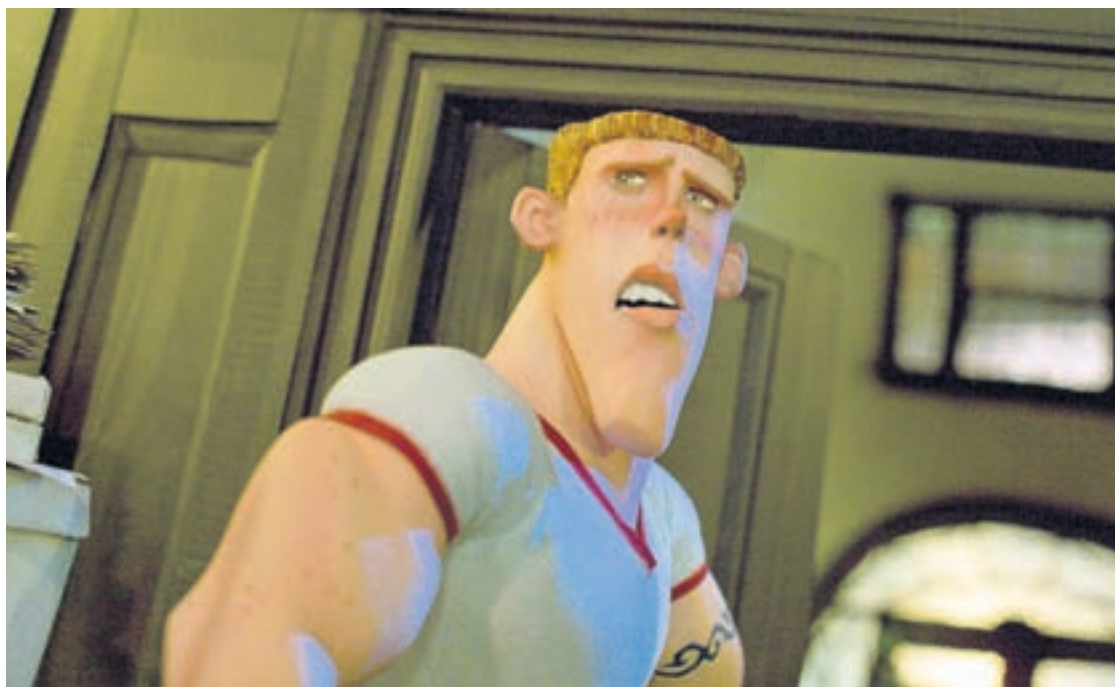
AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — We may be seeing more prominent gay and lesbian characters on TV shows, but the movie industry lags well behind the small screen, a U.S. advocacy group reports.

In its first study of LGBT roles in major studio releases, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation found that compared with TV, where there has been a significant shift over the past decade, "Major studios appear reluctant to include LGBT characters in significant roles or franchises." In its report released Wednesday, GLAAD found that of the 101 releases from Hollywood's six major studios in 2012, just 14 included characters identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. Most were no more than cameos or minor roles, it said — and none of the films tracked had transgender characters.

"Until LGBT characters appear more regularly in these studio films, there will be the appearance of bias," said Wilson Cruz, GLAAD's national spokesperson, in an interview. He added that his organization will be meeting with studio executives to discuss the findings.

There were some bright spots in 2012, and some more ambiguous ones, the



This film image released by Focus Features shows the animated character Mitch, voiced by Casey Affleck, in a scene from "ParaNorman." The character Mitch in the 2012 "ParaNorman" was revealed at the end to be gay. The GLAAD advocacy group says that movie was an exception in a year that showed Hollywood's major studios are reluctant to include LGBT characters in important roles in their films.

Associated Press

group said. For example, "Skyfall," the hugely successful installment of the James Bond franchise, featured a main villain, played by Javier Bardem, who was apparently bisexual.

"It was great to see an LGBT character in such a significant role," said Matt Kane, associate director of entertainment media at GLAAD, also in an interview. "But unfortunately the character was also devious, psychotic, and untrustworthy — it fell into that trap."

The report — called the 2013 Studio Responsibility

Index — rates each of the six studios according to the number of LGBT-inclusive films they released. Faring worst: 20th Century Fox and Disney, which each receive "failing" grades; the other four — Paramount, Sony, Universal and Warner

Bros. — receive grades of "adequate."

Asked in advance Tuesday afternoon about the report, the studios had no immediate comment.

One of the best examples of an LGBT-inclusive film in 2012, according to GLAAD,

was an animated family film: "ParaNorman," about a misunderstood boy who can communicate with the ghosts of dead people. In the film, which came from the studio LAIKA, Norman's cheerleader sister asks the hunky football hero Mitch for a movie date. He casually makes a reference to his boyfriend. The film's writer and co-director, Chris Butler, said he was not optimistic that there would be an inevitable wave of more on-screen LGBT characters as time goes on and society changes, as on TV.

"It's a mistake to assume it's inevitable," he said. "The only way to make change is to do something about it. It takes hard work."

Kane, at GLAAD, said the new report would help reinforce its longtime claims that Hollywood studios need to do more.

"Over the years we have met with studios, and it's always a point we make," Kane said. "Now, we have the numbers to take to them." □

Judge allows taping of Snooki MTV series

BERKELEY TOWNSHIP, New Jersey (AP) — A judge won't stop production of the MTV reality show "Snooki & JWoww" in a New Jersey town that's rebuilding from last year's Superstorm Sandy.

Berkeley Township officials and residents fear taping of the "Jersey Shore" spinoff could hinder recovery efforts. Attorney Ron Gasiorowski tells the Asbury Park Press he's not pleased with the ruling. But he says the judge has not ruled on his argument that the production violates the town's zoning ordinance. □



In this Thursday, Jan. 12, 2012 file photo, Nicole "Snooki" Polizzi attends a media event to announce her new venture, Team Snooki Boxing and the upcoming boxing matches featuring Ireland's Hyland brothers, in New York.

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — James Franco is coming back to TV, but this time it's not for the Academy Awards.

The Ovation channel said Wednesday that it's joining with the actor-writer-filmmaker on a new series, "James Franco Presents." Ovation said the series will document Franco's explorations of the art world, including his gallery exhibits and other "passion projects." The prime-time series will include Franco's "heroes" in various areas of the arts, the channel said. The film actor has dabbled in TV since his breakout role in the series "Freaks and Geeks" in 1999 and hosted the 2011 Oscars with Anne Hathaway.

"James Franco Presents" will debut this year on Ovation. □



This March 14, 2013 file photo shows actor James Franco at the LA premiere of "Spring Breakers" at the ArcLight Hollywood in Los Angeles. Franco will host and produce "James Franco Presents," a new series debuting in the fall on the Ovation channel.

Associated Press

James Franco gets artsy with Ovation channel

Josh Duhamel loves Fergie's lady lumps



Josh Duhamel, and his wife, Fergie, arrive on the red carpet for the premiere of "Scenic Route" at the Chinese 6 Theater on Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2013 in Los Angeles. Associated Press

NICOLE EVATT
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Josh Duhamel may diss his pregnant wife in his latest film, but in real life, he loves his lady's lumps. At the Los Angeles premiere for "Scenic Route," the 40-year-old actor said that although the dark and twisted char-

acter he portrays in the movie feels that his wife is unattractive, he thinks Fergie has "never been more beautiful." "It's the one thing that I sort of opposed in the script and I tried to get it cut out," Duhamel said. "Scenic Route" is centered on two old friends who are stranded in the desert and

must survive the extreme heat. The film opens in limited release Friday. Fergie, who is due soon, appeared on Duhamel's arm Tuesday night. Is the couple ready for their first child? Duhamel said they "don't have a bag in the car," but adds that the hospital is close "if anything happens." □



This Feb. 10, 2013 file photo shows rapper Drake at the 55th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. MTV announced Wednesday, Aug. 21, that Drake will perform at the MTV Video Music Awards on Sunday, Aug. 25. Associated Press

Drake to perform at MTV awards; Swift to attend

NEW YORK (AP) — Drake is the latest top musician set to perform at the MTV Video Music Awards on Sunday. The rapper joins performers including Lady Gaga, Justin Timberlake, Katy Perry and Kanye West. MTV also announced Wednesday that Taylor Swift, Selena Gomez, Joseph Gordon-Levitt and

Kevin Hart will attend the awards show. Timberlake and Macklemore & Ryan Lewis lead in nominations with six each. Miley Cyrus and Robin Thicke — who will also perform — are tied with Bruno Mars with four nominations each. Jared Leto, Emeli Sande and A\$AP Rocky will also appear. □

Jazz legend Marian McPartland dies in US

NEW YORK (AP) — Marian McPartland, a UK-born jazz pianist and host of the National Public Radio show "Piano Jazz," has died in New York. She was 95.

An NPR spokeswoman says she died of natural causes Tuesday night at her home.

Her career spanned more than six decades. She became a fixture in the jazz world as a talented musician and radio personality.

McPartland recorded more than 50 albums for the Concord Jazz label and played in venues across the U.S.

In 1978, she brought her talent for composition and status as a jazz insider to radio and began hosting the Peabody Award-winning "Piano Jazz." On the show, she hosted hundreds of jazz professionals.

In 2007, the Kennedy Center named McPartland a Living Jazz Legend. Among her many recognitions, she was named an NEA



In this March 19, 2008 file photo, Marian McPartland smiles while playing the piano during a celebration of her 90th birthday in New York. Associated Press

Jazz Master by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2000.

Born Margaret Marian Turner in England, she began playing classical piano at the age of 3. At 17, she was accepted to the prestigious

Guildhall School of Music. She left in her third year to play piano with a touring vaudeville act — to the chagrin of her parents, who she said were "horrified."

She came to live in New York in

1953. She turned her keen ears toward her contemporaries, writing articles and essays that immortalized the people and places of the jazz world in the 1950s and '60s.

In one essay, included in McPartland's collected works, "You've Come a Long Way, Baby," she wrote about her experiences as a woman striving to be taken seriously by male musicians.

"Once a man stood at the bar watching me intently, and when the set was finished he came over and said with a smile, 'You know, you can't be a respectable woman the way you play piano,'" she wrote. "For some reason or another, this struck me as a great compliment."

McPartland continued to tour and perform into her 80s.

"I can't walk. I'm in miserable pain. But at the piano, I don't feel a thing," McPartland said during one appearance. □

One Reform, Indivisible



PAUL KRUGMAN
© 2013 New York Times

Recent political reporting suggests that Republican leaders are in a state of high anxiety, trapped between an angry base that still views Obamacare as the moral equivalent of slavery and the reality that health reform is the law of the land and is going to happen. But those leaders don't deserve any sympathy. For one thing, that irrational base is a Frankenstein monster of their own creation. Beyond that, everything I've seen indicates that members of the Republican elite still don't get the basics of health reform - and that this lack of understanding is in the process of turning into a major political liability.

On the unstopability of Obamacare: We have this system in which Congress passes laws, the president signs them, and then they go into effect. The Affordable Care Act went through this process, and there is no legitimate way for Republicans to stop it.

Is there an illegitimate way? Well, the GOP can try blackmail, either by threatening to shut down the government or, an even more extreme tactic, threatening not to raise the debt limit, which would force the U.S. government into default and risk financial chaos. And Republicans did somewhat successfully blackmail President Barack Obama back in 2011.

However, that was then. They faced a president on the ropes after a stinging defeat in the midterm election, not a president triumphantly re-elected. Furthermore, even in 2011 Obama wouldn't give ground on the essentials of health care reform, the signature achievement of his presidency. There's no way he would undermine the reform at this late date.

Republican leaders seem to get this, even if the base doesn't. What they don't seem to get, however, is the integral nature of the reform. So let me help out by explaining, one more time, why Obamacare looks the way it does.

Start with the goal that almost everyone at least pretends to support: giving Americans with pre-existing medical conditions access to health insurance. Governments can, if they choose, require that insurance companies issue policies with-

out regard to an individual's medical history, "community rating," and some states, including New York, have done just that. But we know what happens next: many healthy people don't buy insurance, leaving a relatively bad risk pool, leading to high premiums that drive out even more healthy people.

To avoid this downward spiral, you need to induce healthy Americans to buy in; hence, the individual mandate, with a penalty for those who don't purchase insurance. Finally, because buying insurance could be a hardship for lower-income Americans, you need subsidies to make insurance affordable for all.

So there you have it: Health reform is a three-legged stool resting on community rating, individual mandates and subsidies. It requires all three legs.

But wait - hasn't the administration delayed the employer mandate, which requires that large firms provide insurance to their employees? Yes, it has, and Republicans are trying to make it sound as if the employer mandate and the individual mandate are comparable. Some of them even seem to think that they can bully Obama into delaying the individual mandate, too. But the individual mandate is an essential piece of the reform, which can't and won't be bargained away, while the employer mandate is a fairly minor add-on that arguably shouldn't have been in the law to begin with.

I guess that after all the years of vilification it was predictable that Republican leaders would still fail to understand the principles behind health reform and that this would hamper their ability to craft an effective political response as the reform's implementation draws near. But their rudest shock is yet to come. You see, this thing isn't going to be the often-predicted "train wreck." On the contrary, it's going to work.

Oh, there will be problems, especially in states where Republican governors and legislators are doing all they can to sabotage the implementation. But the basic thrust of Obamacare is, as I've just explained, coherent and even fairly simple. Moreover, all the early indications are that the law will, in fact, give millions of Americans who currently lack access to health insurance the coverage they need, while giving millions more a big break in their health care costs. And because so many people will see clear benefits, health reform will prove irreversible.

This achievement will represent a huge defeat for the conservative agenda of weakening the safety net.

And Republicans who deluded their supporters into believing that none of this would happen will probably pay a large personal price. But as I said, they have nobody but themselves to blame. □



The Past's Future Republican



FRANK BRUNI
© 2013 New York Times

Let Rand Paul have his epic filibuster and Ted Cruz his scowling threats to shut down the government. Let Chris Christie thunder to a second term as the governor of New Jersey, his hubris flowering as his ultimate designs on the White House take shape.

Jeb Bush, lying low in the subtropics of Florida, has something they don't: the unalloyed affection of many of the Republican Party's most influential money-men, who are waiting for word on what he'll do, hoping that he'll seek the 2016 presidential nomination and noting with amusement how far he has drifted off fickle pundits' radar, at least for the moment.

Politics today has a shorter memory than ever. It also has a more furious metabolism, which Bush hasn't fed much since March, when he was promoting a new book on immigration and created enormous confusion about whether he does or doesn't support a pathway to citizenship for immigrants who came here illegally. (He later clarified that he does, with caveats, and even later praised immigrants for being "more fertile.") That awkwardness gave some of his supporters pause, as they wondered whether he'd been too long out of the fray and was too clumsy for the split-second hyperscrutiny of the Twitter era. He hasn't run for anything since 2002, when he was re-elected as the gov-

ernor of Florida, an office he left in early 2007. A whole lot has changed since.

But with the exception of that immigration mess, Bush has been a more articulate advocate of a new tone and direction for the Republican Party than have Paul, Cruz, Christie or others currently in the foreground of the 2016 race, which has already begun, on both sides of the aisle. (Hillary Clinton gave a big policy speech last week and has another already announced.)

He has signaled more willingness for fiscal compromise with Democrats than Paul Ryan and Marco Rubio, for example, have. He has rightly emphasized the importance of social mobility to America's fortunes and has rightly sounded an alarm that such mobility is on the wane.

At 60, he's older than any of the five potential Republican presidential candidates I've already mentioned or than Scott Walker (don't forget him), Bobby Jindal or Rick Santorum. His face is less fresh, thanks largely to a surname shared with the party's last two presidents.

But here's the first great irony, oddity, oxymoron or whatever you want to call it of the 2016 race: If Republicans care about safeguarding their future, their wisest and best bet may be to reach back into their past. In a pack not exactly brimming with moderate, sensitive voices, Bush's stands out as less strident, more reasonable and more forward-looking than his potential rivals'. Lately, the news media's attention has focused on Paul, Cruz and especially Christie, who was just on the cover of New York magazine and has drawn headlines with veiled and unveiled swipes at fellow Republicans. He's serving notice, as he did with his embrace of President Barack Obama during Hurricane Sandy, that he puts less stock in party etiquette or ideological purity than in the practicalities of governing and the necessities of winning.

But he's also scaring some Republican power brokers, and

not solely or even mainly because he's iconoclastic. It's because he's so very loud, so very proud, a ticking time bomb of self-congratulatory bellicosity and gratuitous insult. Would he really be the best nominee?

In a meeting with Republicans in Boston last week, he prematurely lashed out at several possible competitors, including Jindal, whom he no doubt had in mind when he reportedly said, "I'm not going to be one of these people who's going to come and call our party stupid." No, Christie's much, much too tactful for that.

Bush has registered concern with the way the party can come across as "anti-science." He has also referred to it as "the party of no," correctly noting that Republicans right now are defined negatively, by all they're against.

And then there's the question that every presidential contender about to submit to a brutal and brutalizing process must ask: Is a burning desire for the White House really present? The fabled fire in the belly? It certainly seems to rage inside Paul, Cruz, Christie. They're infernos of untempered ambition.

Bush has a cooler temperature. But for the party's prospects in 2016 and its image beyond then, that could be good. Just as Republicans can't be the Party of Stupid or the Party of No, they can't be the Party of Perpetual Ire, and Bush isn't great at irate.

He's better positioned for 2016 than he was for 2012, when the bitter disappointments of his older brother's presidency were more keenly remembered and frequently invoked. Besides, if Hillary Clinton indeed rolls to the Democratic nomination, Republicans needn't be so concerned about a nominee of their own with a dynastic aura. Clinton versus Bush would be political royalty versus political royalty.

Just imagine Barbara Bush's muttered asides. That alone is almost reason to wish for the matchup, or cause for her second-born son to take a pass. □

In France, A Quest To Make Gruff Service More Gracious

LIZ ALDERMAN

© 2013 New York Times

PARIS - On a recent afternoon near the Place de la Bastille, Alberto Riberio, a tourist from Spain, stopped with his family at a quaint cafe and asked a waiter if they could sit down. "Look around!" he recalled the waiter replying abruptly. "You see empty tables, don't you?" When the family tried to order food in halting French, the waiter rolled his eyes, Riberio said. Later, when

The soul-searching is coming from an unlikely place: the Paris tourism board. It is ramping up a charm offensive to burnish the image of France - and Paris in particular - as a kinder place for tourists. Officials have been deluging cafes, hotels, shops and taxi ranks with 20,000 more pamphlets titled "Do You Speak Touriste?", a manual on how to make travelers feel more welcome, after 35,000 copies handed out in July ran out.

Régional du Tourisme Paris Île-de-France. With 30 million tourists a year, Paris is one of the most visited cities in the world, he said. "But we can do more." How much more remains to be seen. Paul Kappe, an owner of the renowned Brasserie de l'Isle Saint-Louis, perched behind the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, gave a Gallic shrug when he saw the brochure. "It starts with the assumption that the French are disagreeable," said Kappe,

rants reported a 10 percent fall in tourism this year compared with a year ago. Perhaps more challenging is the growing competition that Paris faces, not only from rivals like London, New York and Barcelona, but also from upstart tourist destinations in the Asia-Pacific region. Last year, more than 20 percent of the world's vacationers visited an Asian city; the region earned \$324 billion in international tourism receipts - a full 30 percent of the global

visitors leave the French capital enchanted by their experience, having never lived the legend of snooty service.

"I can't think of any time when I've been treated rudely," said Paul Sanger, 74, an Atlanta native who said he had visited Paris more than 100 times over five decades. "A lot of Americans think the French are being rude because they can't understand them, but a lot of it is a cultural thing."

To many foreigners, Paris is easier to navigate than ever. Today, English has become the new French for an army of young Parisien waiters who switch between the languages with ease, and even pride, when they hear a foreign accent. And many of the 600,000 Parisiens employed in the tourism industry place a premium on politesse.

Still, "snobisme" is hardly a relic of the past, and even the French complain about a perceived lack of civility among some of their big city brethren. A spate of mocking television ads by the newspaper Le Parisien a few years ago, showing Parisiens cutting in line and leaving poodle droppings on the sidewalk, provoked knowing laughs. And this is by no means the first time the government has encouraged a more polished image: In 1995, a "Bonjour" campaign urged people to be pleasant to tourists, echoing several similar efforts since World War II.

Of course, tourists can be uncouth, too. "A lot of Americans shout, or don't say hello, and then they say the French treated them rudely," said Karen Fawcett, the president of BonjourParis, a website that dispenses travel and cultural insights. "If you don't have some cultural sensitivity, you are probably not going to be well received." Fawcett said her main tips for visitors were to be polite, keep their voices down and not assume they will be served immediately. "A simple 'bonjour' or a 's'il vous plaît' will go a long way," she said. □



Tourists from Mexico at the Brasserie de l'Isle Saint-Louis restaurant in Paris. An effort is under way to make France, especially Paris, a kinder place for tourists.

(Agnes Dherbeys/International Herald Tribune)

a wrong dish was served, an argument ensued over whether it would be changed.

"In general, the French can be quite friendly and helpful," said Riberio, whose family went on to have a pleasant stay. But the encounter "was a reminder of why they can also have a reputation for being rude," he said.

In the City of Light, an eternal question is once again spurring debate: Is the stereotype of the brusque Frenchman justified, or do visitors just not understand the French?

The British, it advises, want to be called by their first names. The Japanese need to feel reassured. The Spanish mainly want people to be nice. ("I would agree with that," Riberio said.) As for Americans, the guide notes, they are glued to their personal devices and want to eat as early as 6 p.m. - a frightful thought to a typical Parisien.

"The goal is to fight against a bad reputation, and improve the quality of the welcome in Paris," said François Navarro, the communication director for the tourism board, the Comité

a contemplative man who kept a watchful eye on the restaurant's sunny terrace, full of waiters and patrons crammed behind tiny tables. "Well, that does have the ring of truth," he said. "But it won't stop a waiter from being unpleasant."

He added, "Their mentality is, 'Don't bother me when I'm working.'"

The campaign holds special importance as France begins to overcome an economic malaise that has deepened a sense of moroseness in the country. This month, the French federation of hotels and restau-

total, according to a U.N. World Tourism Organization report. By contrast, the United States earned \$126 billion from tourism, while France earned \$54 billion, less than China and Spain, the report said.

"There's a huge economic battle going on between the world's tourism capitals," Navarro said. Just 15 years ago, he said, there were about 60 major destinations; today, there are about 600. "If we don't improve our service, we will lose money."

But is the effort really necessary? After all, countless